

Newsletter - November 2012



Welcome to the last newsletter for the year. Newsletters will resume in February next year once you are all back at school and settled into the New Year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and lovely comments I receive about the newsletters and the theme manuals. The Facebook page has grown immensely this year and my newsletter mailing list has doubled. Welcome to all the new members. It has been valuable to be able to share ideas and information about Early Childhood with everyone. Christmas is upon us and it is a good time to teach children about sharing and caring for those less privileged than they are. See my ideas and suggestions at the end of the newsletter. I hope you will embrace the care and share project with enthusiasm. It is my intention to work less at school next year due to some back problems I am experiencing and spend more time writing new themes. I welcome any titles you would like me to write. May you and your families all have a blessed, safe and restful festive season and if you are travelling stay safe. See you in 2013.

New look format

I am trying this new-look format for the preschool theme newsletter. It feels more streamlined and easier to read. I would appreciate your feedback.

CAPS outcomes all complete

At last I have completed converting all the theme manuals to have the CAPS outcomes. If you have manuals with the NCS outcomes you can download free of charge from the preschool theme web site all the CAPS outcomes to paste over the old ones.

It may take another week or so before they are all up on the web site.

They can be found at www.preschoolthemes.co.za under the heading CAPS outcomes.

Christmas activities

Please visit my Pinterest boards for some fantastic Christmas creative activities to do with the children.

It's such an exciting time of the year for children so make full use of Nov and make plenty of decorations. I also have a board of Christmas cooking ideas for children. And then spoil yourself and have a look at some of the other adult Christmas boards I have created. I belong to an organisation that decorates the town hall with about 12 big Christmas trees so I am always on the lookout for Xmas ideas and activities which will explain the many pins and boards I have! And of course this year will be the first year we will have our first granddaughter for Xmas which will make it a very special one. She will only be 5 months old and will probably sleep through much of the celebrations!

General link: <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/>

School Christmas activities: <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/christmas-school/>

Christmas creative activities

This tree was made up of a variety of activities in the toddler age group. The children covered a circle of card with glitter and the teacher pasted a photo of each child in the centre of the Xmas bauble and added a sparkly pipe cleaner as the hanger.

The 'gifts' were cut by the teachers using paper that the children painted, adding bows for a festive effect. The backdrop of the tree had also been painted by the children using large sheets of paper. The end product looked lovely.





Christmas decorations

This decoration was made with wooden sucker sticks pasted together and decorated with paint and glitter. A picture of the child was pasted into the opening once it was all dry.

This decoration on the right was made with a purchased wooden circle but it will be just as effective if you cut a circle from firm cardboard.

The toddlers painted the decorations and once dried they pasted collage pom poms, shiny jewels and foam shapes to the circle. The teacher filled the centre with a photo of the child.



Birthdays and birthday charts



Birthdays charts are an important display of every classroom. So I thought I would give you a few ideas in preparation for the New Year. For every child their birthday is a special day and they should be made to feel special and unique. Each school does this in a different way. In our preschool in NZ, the child decorates their own crown using 'special art material' reserved for this activity only. We have stickers, special clean and easy to use paints in sponge tipped bottles (so they are clean and easy to get out and put away). We add glue and glitter and print a photo of each child to paste to the crown. If possible we try and make the crown the day before so it is dry and stapled and ready to be worn on their birthday.

At mat time, the birthday child sits on a chair next to the teacher wearing their crown. We allow them to choose a story for the teacher to read and they also choose their favourite song for everyone to sing. Of course we all sing happy birthday and give them claps for their age. Sometimes we have cake and candles to light if the parents have brought in one, but if not we make one from play dough and always keep a set of candles and matches for these times. We also encourage parents to join the birthday mat time and to share the cake with the children. Birthday cakes and eats is another topic on it's own..... Some schools allow birthday children to wear civvies for the day if they usually wear a uniform or a special rosette badge for the day.

You can find several birthday charts at this web site.

<http://gigglepotz.com/2012/07/10/birthday-charts-for-the-classroom/>



This is rather a cute idea where each child gets a pencil when it's their birthday.

<http://www.lessonplandiva.com/p/photos.html>

I have created a Pinterest board with birthday charts and birthday ideas for the classroom
<http://pinterest.com/kstedall/birthday-charts/>

Summer sandal- art activity

We made these sandals with the children for part of our summer theme. We gave each child a piece of light weight card which they painted. When it was dry we traced the children's feet and cut out the sandals. The teacher put a coloured pipe cleaner for the thong section. For the older children they can help to trace each other's feet, cut out their own feet first and then paint them.



Toddler painting activities

Dinosaurs from painted egg box cartons



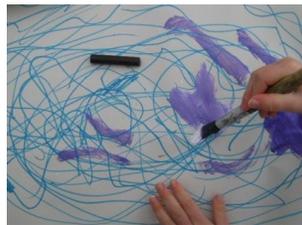
I did not do this activity but I was very impressed with the idea. The toddlers had paint egg boxes (the flat tray one for 36 eggs) and one of the teachers displayed them as a dinosaur using a staple gun to attach them to the display board.

The leg was created with cut out foot prints. This concept could be applied to many different animals. Crocodiles would work well.



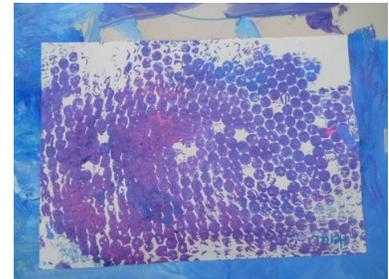
Drawing and painting their drawings

I covered a large table with paper from a roll and gave the children koki pens to draw on the paper. I then added paint to the activity and the children happily 'painted their drawings' As usual one child painted their hands which I so dislike!



Painting bubble wrap and making prints

I set out a big sheet of bubble wrap that covered the whole table. The children painted the bubble wrap and then we placed a sheet of paper over the painted bubble wrap and took a print. It was very effective.



Painting yogurt containers

I had accumulated several 1 litre yogurt containers and knowing how much toddlers enjoy 'containers' I set them out as a painting activity. I was quite taken aback by the number of children wanting to do this activity. I used a flat container and placed a few colours of paint into the flat container including some glue. The children happily painted their containers and some spent lots of time 'mixing' the paint. Once their containers were painted, I set out coloured foam shapes which they pasted to the wet paint (which had glue in it). It was interesting to see which children painted the whole container including inside while others only painted the lid and walked away.



Our summer tree





Creating the trunk and branches

The children created some paper to use for the trunk. I set out brown paint and plastic cars. They dipped the cars into the paint and drove the painted cars over the paper creating a textured paint effect. I used this group painting to cut out the branches for the tree.

Flowers: To create the flowers I cut out flower shaped paper and the children printed them with corks.



Leaves: For the leaves the children painted some pages green and I cut out the leaves for the tree. To vary the painting activity I put out white paint with dark green paint and as usual the children 'mixed' the paint so we got a lovely pale green.

The whole tree was displayed together and looked very nice.



Sandpit activities

We filled our water tray with sand from the sandpit. I gave the children several plastic milk lids and bottle tops which we 'hid' in the sand as treasures. The children then used their hands to feel for the treasures. And once again they loved to have a container to put their treasures in. We repeated this hide and seek activity several times. Even though they helped to hide the treasures with me, they were so excited to find them and pop them into their containers



Share and care

I have received some requests for equipment and materials from some disadvantaged schools that have recently been set up. If you have any materials or equipment you are happy to share with these schools please send me an e mail (rodandkarin@xtra.co.nz) and I will put you in contact with the schools.

R5 donation for school addresses

As my contribution to the share and care:

I will donate R5 towards equipment for these schools for every address you send me of a preschool who may be interested in purchasing the preschool theme books.

Since I have communicated with many schools already, the donation will only be valid for an address that has not received a theme book or bought theme books already. I have a database which I work from. If you only have an email contact for me and it leads to an address I will also donate R5.

Here are some ideas for you to think about how you could help these schools.

- Suggest to the parents of your schools to each donate a gift or food for a preschool as a social responsibility and to encourage the children to care and share with others.
- Another idea is to offer to buddy with a disadvantaged school for a year and support them in whatever way you can. Even simple things like paper are often hard to come by in the rural areas. So many of your parents companies and businesses throw away so much useful stuff which can be recycled to a disadvantaged school. I can put you in contact with schools if you do not have one of your own choices.
- Send me addresses of schools you have nearby who I can contact to promote the preschool theme books.

I wish you all the best for the rest of the year and a fabulous holiday break.

Happy teaching Regards Karin

