

## Preschool Themes Newsletter – November 2016

Hello Everyone,

The end of the year has come around so fast this year. This will be the last newsletter for 2016. I would like to thank all of you for being a part of the preschool themes newsletters journey and I trust you have gained a few new ideas and some inspiration for your teaching and schools. As we wind down to the school break take some time to reflect on the year, the progress and growth of the many children whose lives you have touched and on your own personal growth. Preschool teaching is a very intense and full on profession but there are so many rewards too. In the frenetic time of the year end be kind to yourself and when it all gets too much stop a while and breathe deeply. You really do make a big impact on the child's life and their families.



**Price increase in January:** An advanced pre warning that there will be a price increase in January of the preschool themes manuals. We have not determined the amount yet.

### Sand tray play

Our centre doesn't use a sand tray too often despite the children really enjoying it. We placed some dry sandpit sand into the sand tray and put in a few teaspoons of dry powder paint (not essential) We added teaspoons, plastic milk lids, small bowls and containers and a few glass pebbles (they are used in vases ). Many children spent a lot of time happily pouring and scooping the sand into the lids and playing with the pebbles. There were a few squabbles over the pebbles so make sure there are enough for about 8 per child. It's best to leave the children to play without too much adult input or interaction and rather just sit back and observe.



There was a fair amount of mathematics happening with children counting the pebbles, creating patterns and doing one to one correspondence by placing one pebble into one lid. Some children made pretend birthday cakes and they counted the spoon candles.

But mostly it was just a calming activity that was especially popular in the later afternoon when the kids are tired. The best part of this activity is that it's inexpensive and easy to set up. If you don't have sand add any other material that can be poured such as rice, samp mealies, beans etc although it is wasteful to use food for this activity.





### Christmas activities

I stop teaching for the year in mid-November and schools in NZ only close around the 19<sup>th</sup> December as they have their longer holiday into February. For this reason I will not be doing any Christmas activities at school to include in this newsletter. I have included a few from past years. If you look at the archived newsletters on the web site you can find many activities there. [www.preschoolthemes.co.za](http://www.preschoolthemes.co.za) under the tab newsletter and look at the October and mainly the November past editions

I have a Pinterest board with a great selection of Christmas art activities and ideas. Please visit the board. Click on the ideas for more information. Some activities will take you to the web site with instructions while others are just an image.

<https://nz.pinterest.com/kstedall/christmas-school/?etslf=19400&eq=Christmas%20-%20sch>





## Art activities

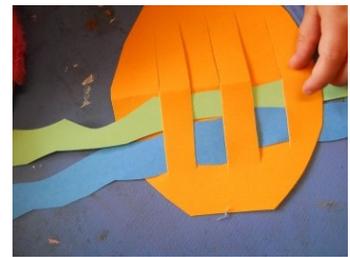
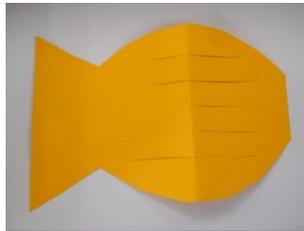
### Weaving fish



For this activity I cut out the fish shapes and cut the slits in the fish for the children. I cut several strips of paper for weaving and threading through the slits. The fish is best made of light weight card while the strips are best as paper. If you don't have coloured paper set out an art activity that will colour paper such as straw blowing, squash

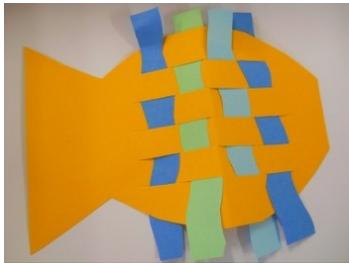
painting etc and cut up the paintings for threading through the fish. Once the four strips were threaded the children cut off the excess paper and secured the ends with a blob of glue.

The children pasted the fish to a paper and drew details around the fish. For older learners and Grade R learners draw the lines for the children to cut their own strips.



**Notes:**

- The 3 year olds struggled with the weaving but enjoyed the activity
- Don't worry if the weaving is not precise. It's good fine motor practice
- Don't cut too many weaving slits and don't make them too close
- Look at the direction to cut the slits in the fish for the weaving (in the photo)
- Keep the weaving strips quite long so they don't pull through
- The strips moved but I helped the children straighten them
- Below is how it should look and the right photo below is how most looked.



**Sheep from pillow stuffing**

I was given some pillow soft toy stuffing which was not suitable to use for stuffing toys so I took it into school. We used it to make sheep.

You can either use black paper for the sheep or the background. Both ways are shown here. I prefer the white sheep on the black paper but you could use blue paper for the background too.



I showed the children how to cut the corners off the A5 paper to round it off for the sheep body. I gave the children smaller squares for the head and they also rounded the corners. I cut legs for the sheep.

The children planned the construction of the sheep before pasting the shapes to the background paper. They pulled the stuffing into smaller pieces and using lots of glue they pasted the wool to the sheep. We used paint to create the grass

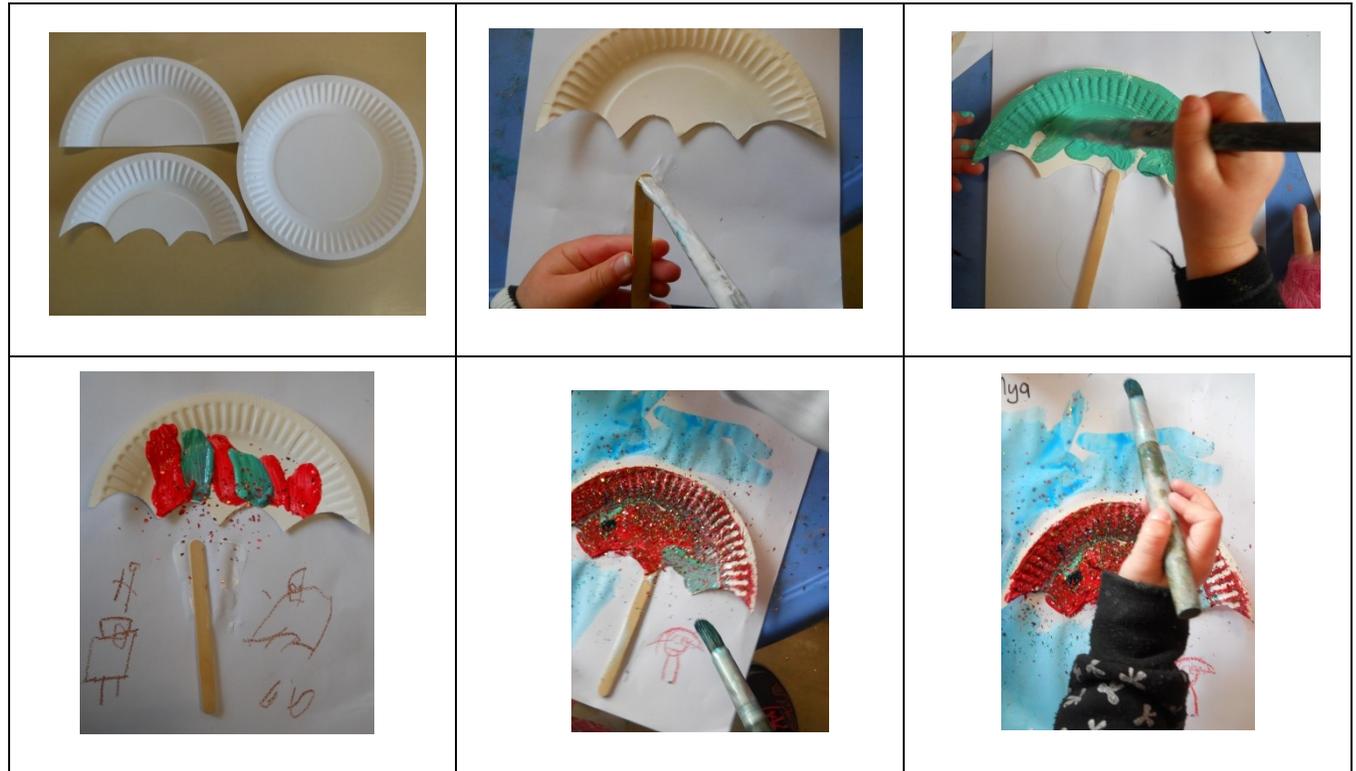


## Umbrellas using paper plates and wax resist rain

I cut paper plates in half and created a pattern on the straight edge to represent an umbrella shape.



The children pasted the umbrella to the paper, added a wooden sucker stick for the handle and then drew a picture of themselves under the umbrella. For the rain (seen left) the children used white wax crayons and then painted the whole background with diluted blue food colouring. The children painted their umbrellas. This activity should be done at a few tables.



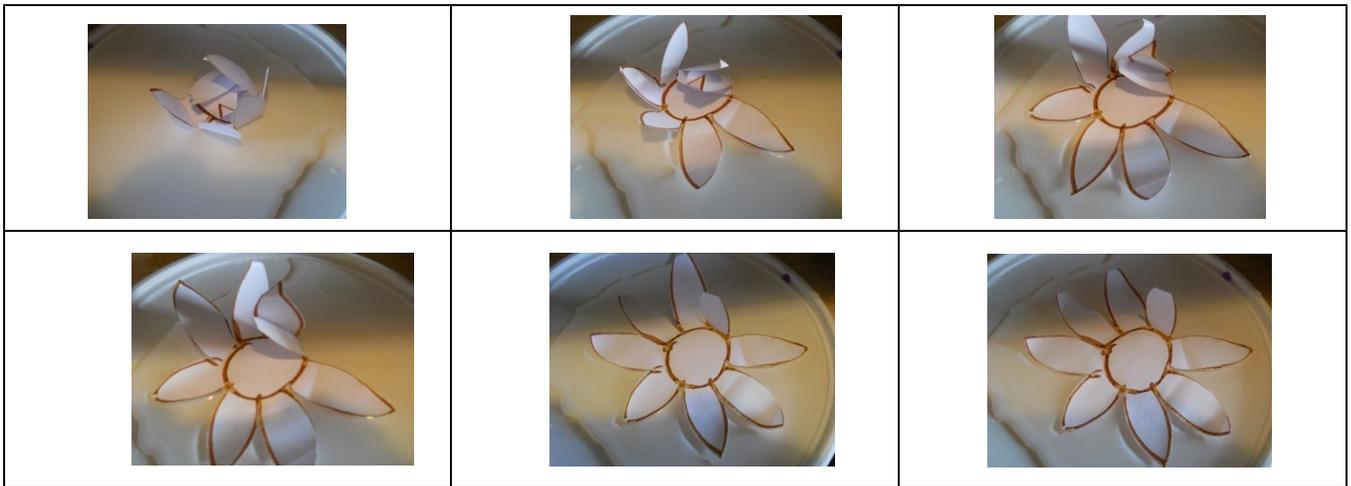
### Notes:

- Encourage the children to plan their picture before they paste.
- Encourage the children to put the glue on the stick and paper plate as opposed to the background paper
- Some children did not place the stick and umbrella together. This is age appropriate and does not need to be corrected
- The younger children 'scribbled' an image of themselves. Once again it's age appropriate. Some children added their pets to the picture.
- Some children did not cover the whole background with diluted food colouring. Encourage them to cover all the white space.
- In NZ there is always glitter freely available in the open art area at school so every picture ends up with glitter. It's not necessary at all!
- If you have limited amounts of wooden sucker sticks ration them as opposed to setting them out on the table. Otherwise this is the end result..... Or use cut toilet rolls into strips for the handle



## Science experiment – water absorption makes the paper flower petals open

A child brought in a book of science experiments so we have been investigating some of the ideas in the book. One of the ideas is to make a paper flower whose petals open as the paper absorbs the water. To do this draw a flower on photocopy paper, cut out and fold the petals inwards. Place the flower onto water and watch the petals open like magic. I was dubious it would work but it worked perfectly! It's not a good idea to colour the flowers. The last few petals took a few minutes to fully open so be patient. Discuss why and how this happened.



The children were encouraged to draw their own flowers, cut them out and to test their flowers. They struggled a bit with this mainly not cutting the petals down to the centre of the flower so the petals can be folded closed.



## Feather painting

The children enjoyed some free painting using feathers.



Happy teaching and I hope you all survive the count down to the school holidays.

Regards  
Karin