

Preschool Themes Newsletter – August 2018



Hello Everyone,

This will be another extra-long newsletter to replace the September edition which will not be sent out as I will be visiting South Africa. In this newsletter I have included several creative activities on the theme of Day and night. In New Zealand we celebrate the Maori New Year called Matariki. The start of the month long celebration of Matariki is celebrated

with the first rising of the Matariki (Pleiades star cluster). So we focussed our creative activities on stars and the night sky. As part of the celebrations we cooked a traditional Maori meal called a Hangi (food cooked in a hole in the ground) with the families joining us for a school get together. The children helped by washing vegetables and we made apple juice from apples donated from an orchard and lemonade from lemons picked from the garden. Everyone enjoyed the meal and fellowship. The teachers set up a star trail outside and the children used their torches to look for the 7 stars that make up the Matariki formation. It was a fun evening for everyone and a modified version of the evening is something to consider doing at your centre when doing the theme of day and night.



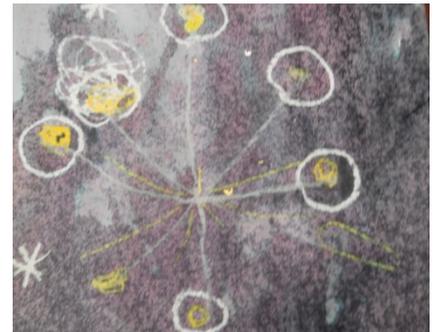
Creative activities

Magic paintings – wax crayon resist painting

When I put out this activity I did not realise how much the younger children would struggle to draw a star. Even after showing them how to draw a basic line star many children still only scribbled. In hindsight now I would have given them a star shaped paper and encouraged them to colour it in, draw on it and draw a line along the edge to frame the star.

You will need:

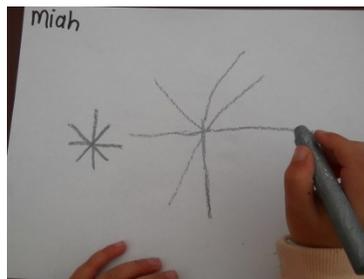
- White paper
- Wax crayons – white, yellow, silver and black
- Black food colouring or very thin powder paint
- Paint brushes
- Optional : Star shaped paper



Method:

Teacher: Dilute the black food colouring and check that it is not too dark or light.

The children draw pictures of stars and moons using the wax crayons. They paint over the wax crayons using the diluted black food colouring covering the whole page. The picture can be framed and displayed with silver paper as in the printing with cookie cutter activity later in the newsletter.





Notes:

- Younger children struggle to draw stars so encourage them to 'scribble' stars. Alternatively cut the paper into a star shape.
- Test the concentration of the black food colouring before giving it to the children.
- Encourage the children to cover the whole paper with black colouring
- No wax crayons – use candles
- Make sure all the drawing is complete before painting over the crayon.



Night skies with stars

We were given these cardboard circles from a parent just as I was thinking of doing a starry night scene so they were ideal for this, especially since they are a heavy weight to carry all the paint and collage. I don't know what they were used for. Any firm card will work such as a cereal box cardboard.

Theme: Night and day

Other themes: Stars, Planets

Ages: 3 - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Cardboard – I used circles but any cardboard such as cereal boxes will be fine
- Black paint
- Paint – silver, blue and purple on flat lids such as ice cream container lids
- Glitter
- Glue
- Coffee jar lids – Mocona coffee
- Stars – cut out in yellow cardboard in 2 or 3 sizes
- Shiny plastic glitter or glitter or Epsom salts



Method:

Teacher: Cut out stars small and large stars using yellow cardboard

The children paint the cardboard black and leave to dry. Using the coffee jar lids place them in the paint (rubber side down) and then turn them as you print with them on the cardboard. This will make a swirl of paint. Add a little silver glitter onto the swirls while the paint is wet. Complete the stars by spreading glue on the one side, pressing them into the shiny plastic (or Epsom salts) and then pasting them onto the printed background.



If you choose to hang these as mobiles paint the back black and sprinkle with glitter.





Notes:

- Give this activity enough time for each process to dry properly
- No shiny plastic snow – use glitter or salt or Epsom salts or cut up tin foil into pieces
- No silver paint – use white paint
- No Moconna lids for painting – use milk lids or jar lids

Printing stars with cookie cutters, filling with paint using ear buds and completing a shiny border

For this activity I bought a cheap plastic graded set of star cookie cutters that had five different sized stars. These worked really well for printing as they have a thick plastic edge. I had a few moon shaped cutters from the play dough table. I tried to glue the black paper to the background paper but for some unknown reason it just would not stick. And the long armed stapler had taken a walk!! So I just sticky taped the printed paper to the background paper.

I cut up some silver wrapping paper into squares and triangles but one of the papers kept curling up and frustrating the children. It was my intention for the children to do patterning as a border but this activity was being done for a Maori New year's celebration and the day we completed them ended up in chaos so the children just pasted them as they pleased. This was my example above and is a great opportunity for the older children to create a pattern before pasting the shapes.



Theme: Day and night

Other themes: Stars and moon, night skies

Ages: 3 - 5 year olds

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

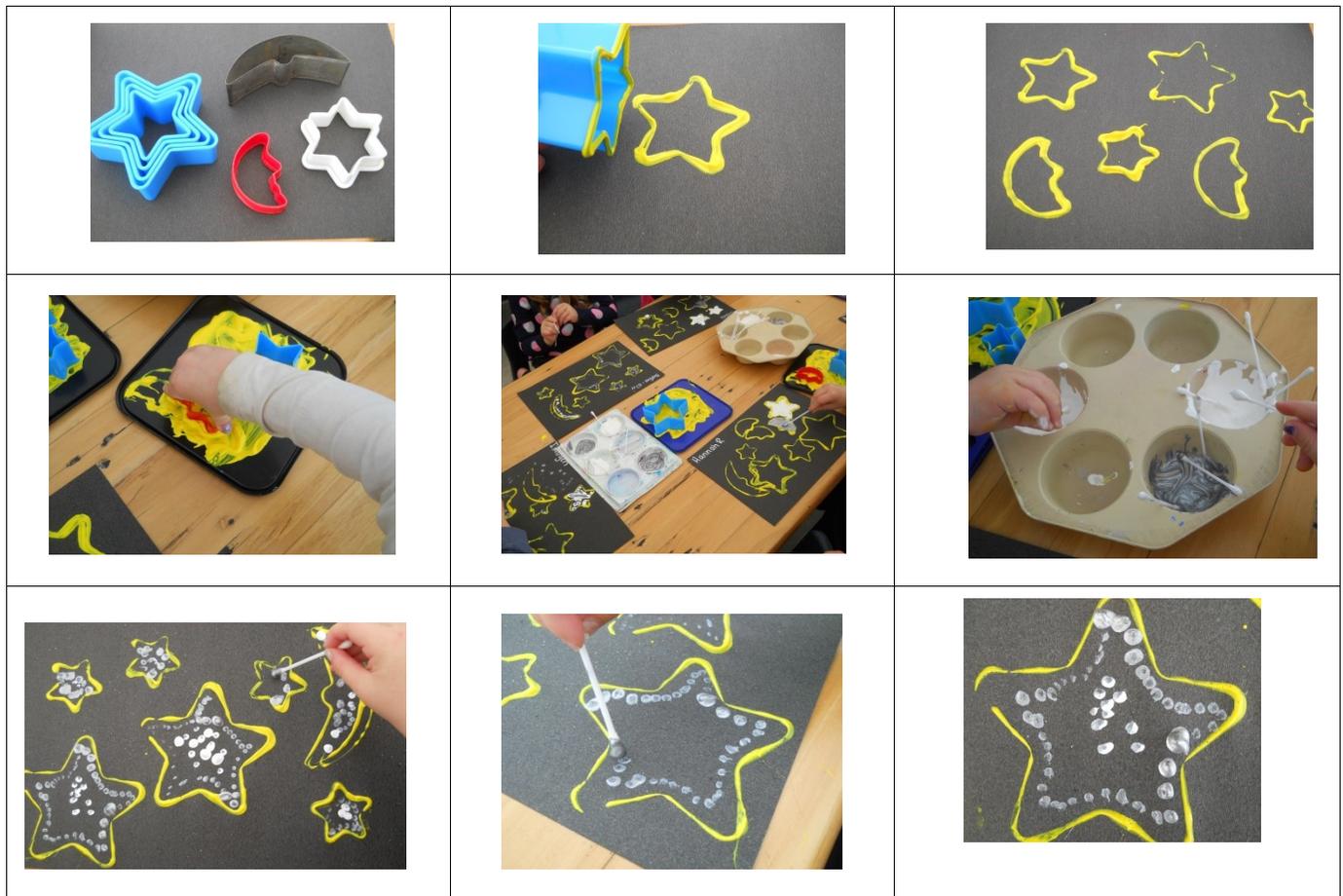
Materials:

- Plastic star cookie cutters, moon shaped cutters
- Yellow paint on flat lids
- Earbuds
- White and silver paint in small containers
- Black A4 paper
- A3 paper for the background – coloured or white
- Shiny wrapping paper – cut into squares and triangles
- Glue and glue brushes



Method:

The children dip the top part of the cookie cutter into the paint and make a print on the black paper. Repeat with prints until the page is covered without overlapping the prints. Using the earbuds fill in the centre of the prints with dots of white/and or silver paint. Some children painted with the earbuds instead of making dots. Once the painting is dry attach the painting to a larger A3 paper and create a border. Using pre-cut shiny wrapping paper the children paste the shapes around the painting. I used coloured paper for the background but white is fine too.





Notes:

- Some children smeared the paint instead of doing dots
- Instead of adding glue to each piece of silver paper it's easier for the children to smear glue on the border and paste the shapes around the painting
- There was some over printing and excessive printing
- Discourage the children from banging the cookie cutters on the paper when printing. Demonstrate how to place it carefully on the paper and press down firmly before lifting it up and repeating in another place
- Plastic microwave containers are great for a paint container for earbud painting.



Theme: Day and night

I used black paper for the star background but any colour can be used. I cut the stars for the children but if you have the older children then set cutting out as one table.

Other themes: Stars and moon, night skies

Ages: 3 - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- A3 paper
- Star template
- Collage material – silver shiny paper, glittered paper, stars, packaging paper
- Glue and glue brushes
- Stars
- Optional: Scissors

Method:

Teacher: Cut out the star shapes. Add glitter to the glue. Prepare collage materials. The children paste glue to a small area of the star and paste collage material. Once the star is covered with collage materials gently sprinkle with some silver glitter. I prefer to do this myself as the children are excessive and often the glitter ends up all in one place. Leave to dry. These can be hung as a mobile.



Optional: I set out scissors for the children to cut their own shapes or cut pre-cut shapes smaller. I left some collage paper in larger sizes. Be aware that some children may spend all their time cutting everything into small useless pieces so supervise and remove the scissors if this is happening.



Notes:

- Some children were excessive with the collage materials
- Some of the metallic wrapping paper curled up and did not stick
- No black paper – paint the paper ahead of time



Theme: String printing night sky

I used black paper for the background to be a night sky.

Other themes: Stars and moon, night skies

Ages: 3 - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- A4 black paper
- String or thick wool cut into pieces about 20 cm
- Flat tray for the paint and paint brushes to push the string around in the paint (can add some glue to the paint)



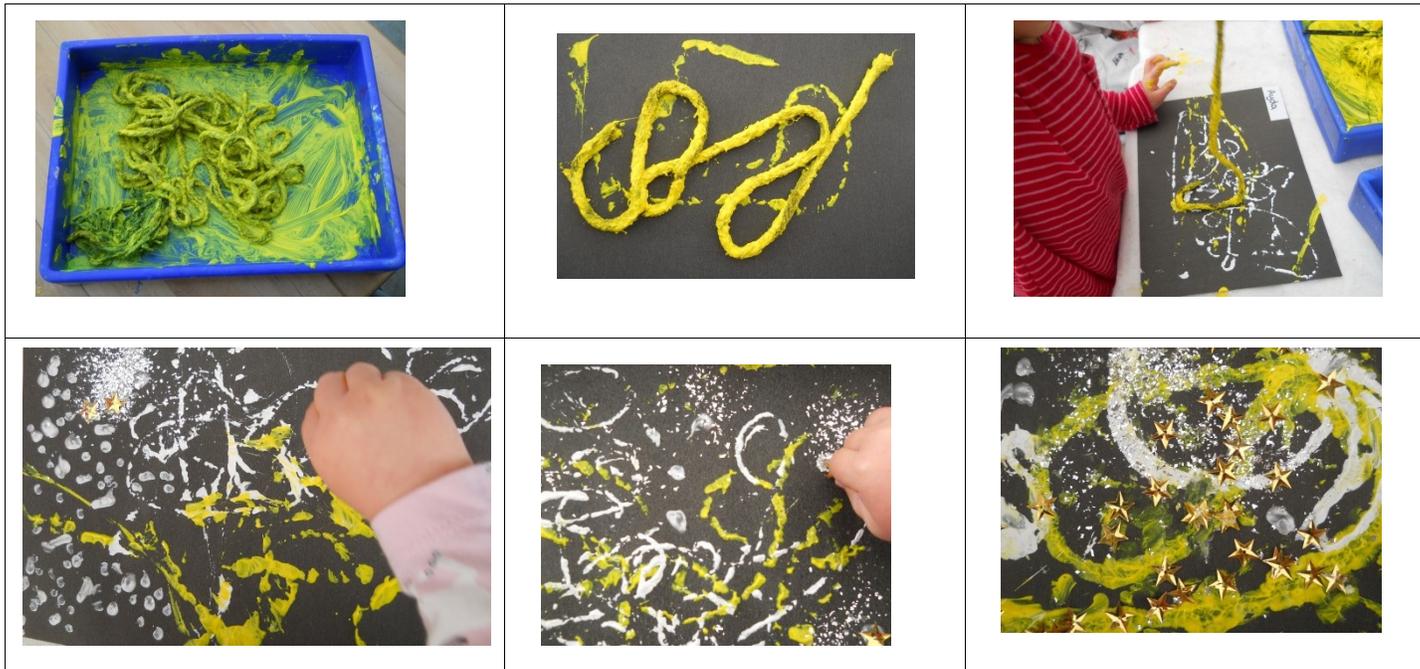
- Collage material –glitter and stars
- Silver paint and earbud
- Stars
- Cloth to wipe messy hands



Method:

Teacher: Prepare the string and soak it well in the paint.

The children pick up a piece of string from the paint tray and place it in a squiggle pattern on the paper. Pick up and repeat again. Replenish the string with paint and repeat. Repeat again with the white paint. Using the earbuds make dots of silver paint. Lightly sprinkle with silver glitter. If you have stars add them to the painting.



Notes:

- Their hands got messy so have a wiping cloth nearby
- Don't make the string too long
- The string got a bit tangled
- Keep the paint brushes away from the children. You need them to stir the string in the paint.

At the end of this activity I let the children enjoy the materials as they chose to (Process art).Some children just can't resist getting paint all over their hands!! It became quite a messy sensory activity.



Happy teaching

Regards
Karin

