

Preschool Themes Newsletter – August 2019

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are all keeping well and staying warm in this very chilly weather. I personally can't wait for this cold to pass and for the days to be drier, warmer and longer. The school day is so much nicer when the weather is good and the children can spend time playing outdoors and running off some of their energy. I really struggle with the high noise levels in a classroom of children who have not had time to play outside. Our centre is lucky to have raincoats for the children to use when they want to play outdoors in the rain but these are expensive and so it's not really a solution for most of you. Our school has a philosophy of "there is no bad weather just bad clothing"! So come rain or shine the children and the teachers are outside, but many children do not enjoy playing in the rain and of course their clothes still get wet and they get cold. I am not a happy teacher standing in the cold and rain! Nor having to change 20 plus wet children. When we have days of rain I try and find toys, games and activities we have not played with in a while and set them out to keep the inside children occupied. And of course doing a few movement activities, games and rhymes a few times during the day may help to keep you sane.....



Creative activities

Kites in the sky

I debated how to do this activity as I wanted the children to collage fabric scraps on the kites but I also wanted to paste the kites to a sky background. This would need a much smaller kite in order for it to fit onto the background paper. But it would be more effective to collage onto a large kite shape. In the end I decided I really wanted to build a complete picture of different components so the smaller kite won.

This activity is best done over three tables or over two days. I created the background first and let it get fairly dry. The kite was made next which needed time to start drying before I pasted it to the background and then the children added the clouds to the sky. The background can be created using any other technique if preferred.

I will add some ribbon bows on the tail of the kite.



A few notes to ensure this activity works:

- The wooden sucker sticks need a good amount of glue to stick
- Don't cut the fabric squares too big
- Some children asked for the squares to be cut into triangles to fit into the smaller spaces on the kite. Children can't cut fabric with school scissors
- If you don't have access to sheets of tissue paper use tissues for the clouds and crumpled plastic bags for painting the background
- Teacher can tie pieces of ribbon to the kite tail.

Themes: Shape – diamond, Wind, Kites, Day and night, Weather

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Background paper – I used light cardboard and A3 size
- Collage materials – fabric squares and triangles
- Glue and glue brushes
- Tissue paper sheets or plastic packets
- Paint – blue and white in a flat container

- String or wool for the kite tail
- Wooden sucker sticks – 2 per child

Method:

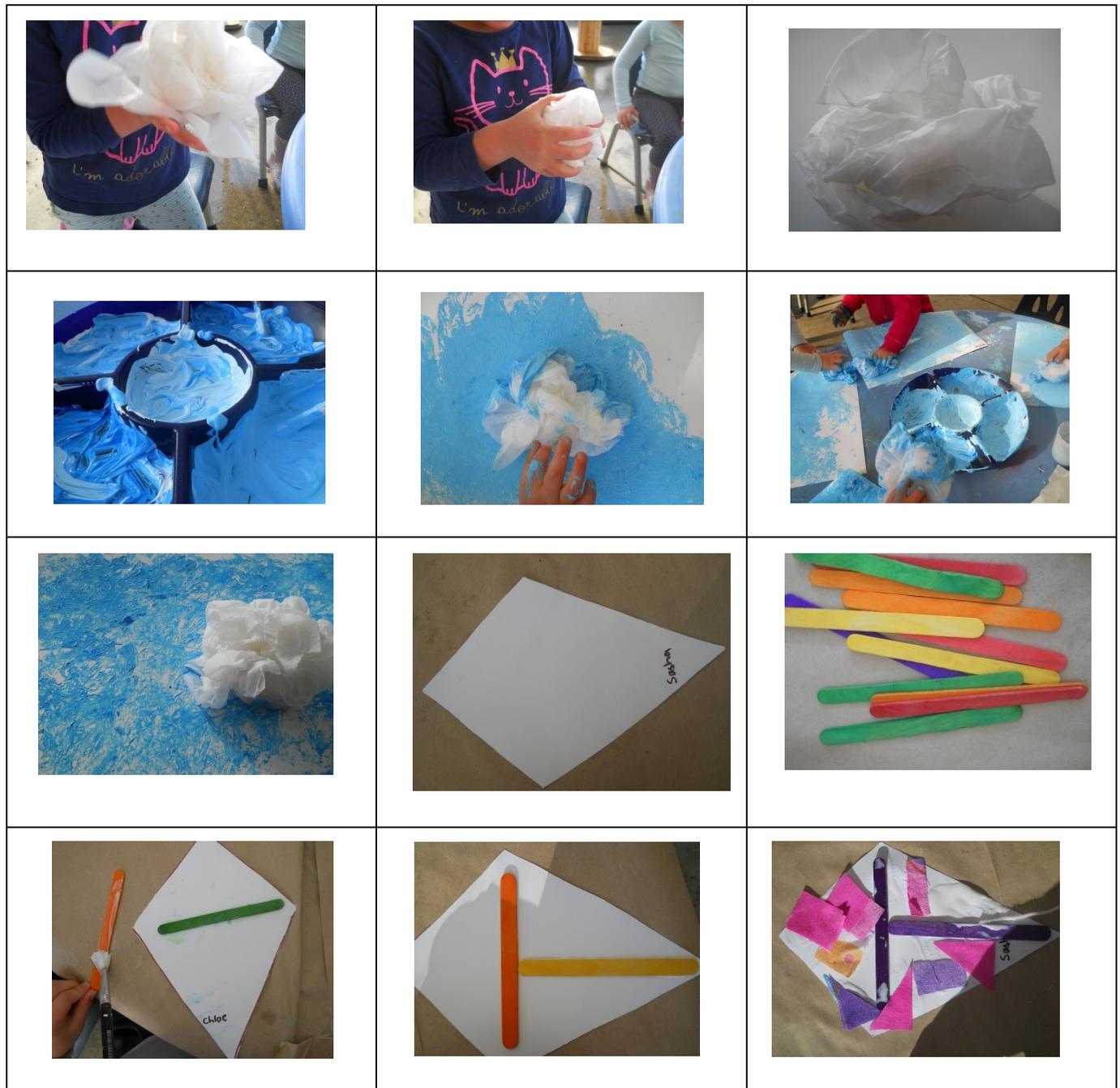
Teacher: Prepare the collage material by cutting the fabric into smaller piece. Cut out kite shapes

Child: Background

The child crumples a large sheet of tissue paper into a ball, dips it into the paint and pats paint onto the background paper making sure the whole page is covered in blue. The paint should be in a flat container as this will not work with paint pots.



Kites: The child pastes the wooden sucker sticks in a T formation on the kite. The child adds fabric pieces to cover the kite. The teacher ties a piece of wool to the end of the sucker stick for the kite tail. The teacher (or child) pastes the kite to the blue sky background. The child crumples smaller pieces of tissue paper for the clouds. It's best to place the glue on the paper and not on the tissue paper and make sure the crumpled paper clouds are well adhered to the paper background.





Notes:

- Some children wanted to paste the whole sky full of clouds
- Some children wanted to smear the paint for the background. As most of it gets covered at the end it did not really matter.

Extension

Fabric squares collage and painting – Process art

Despite the simplicity of this activity the children really enjoy doing this art.

Themes: Clothing

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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



Materials:

- Background paper A3 – I used a slightly heavier paper to carry the weight of the paint and fabric
- Paint – 3 colours
- Glue and glue brushes

Teacher: Cut the fabric into smaller squares

Child: **Water:** The child selects some fabric squares and pastes them the paper. The child paints between the fabric squares. Encourage the child to put the glue on the fabric square and not the paper.

Younger children: You may prefer to cut the fabric squares larger for the younger children.



to



Notes:

- Some children painted over the fabric squares instead of around and between them
- Several children pasted the fabric squares with the wrong side of the fabric facing upwards which wasn't an issue
- The fabric squares tend to stick together if you cut them with several layers so try and separate them before you set them out.
- This activity was enjoyed by all the children especially the younger children.



Cookie printed stars

I really liked the end product of this activity but it was definitely suited to the 3 ½ year old and possibly 4 years and up. The younger children had great difficulty doing a clean print but still enjoyed the activity. For this activity I managed to buy a cheap set of graded sized star cookie cutter at Christmas time but I am sure they are available all year. They are particularly suitable as one edge is nice and thick so it makes a nice print.

Themes: Day and night, Space, Stars, Opposites – Big and Small

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

Skills: Large muscles, small muscles

Materials:

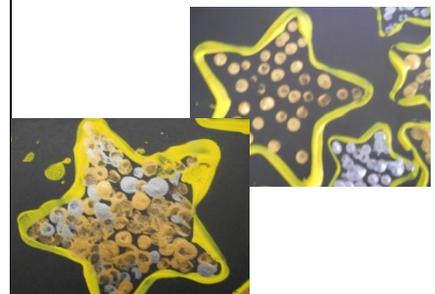
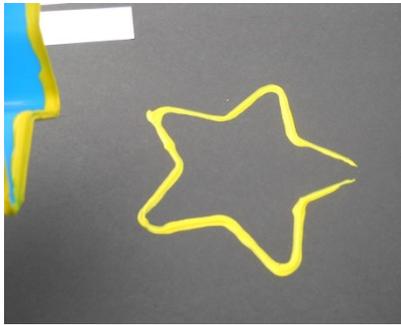
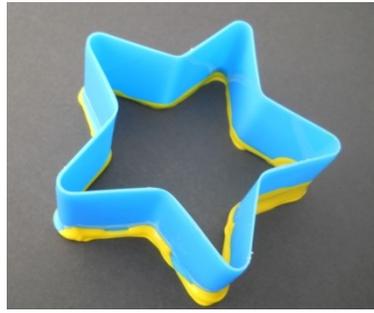
- Black paper (white is fine too)
- Cookie cutters – star shaped
- Paint – yellow
- Flat lids for the paint
- Gold and silver paint – or white is effective too
- Small paint trays for the gold and silver paint
- Earbuds



Method:

Teacher: Prepare the paint

Child: The child selects a cookie cutter and carefully presses the shape onto the black paper to make a print. The child repeats this action changing the size of the cookie cutter and making several prints on the paper without overlapping. Using the earbuds the child makes dots of gold and silver paint into the stars to fill them in. Remind the child to put the earbud back into the paint often and to try and keep it upright when painting.



Notes:

- The younger children struggle with this activity but they enjoyed doing the star printing all over the paper
- Black paper is more effective but it can easily be done on white paper
- If you don't have access to gold and silver paint use white
- Instead of painting with earbuds the children can do fingerprints in the star outlines. The prints will need to be dry before doing this as the hand will smear the edge of the star shapes.

		
Three year old	Child with learning problems – perseverance	Over printing

Stars with pastels, colour wash and drawing with black koki pens

I have done the rainbow stars as a background in a previous activity so when I saw this activity on Pinterest I knew it would be a great end result. The children are somewhat younger in the group so the end results were a bit less accurate but were still effective. So if you do have a younger age group then just change your expectations for this background and they will manage with ease.

To create the star burst or rainbow star background as I like to call it I drew a dot in the centre of the page and then made dots around the edge of the paper as guidelines for the children to draw from the centre to a dot. Very few of the children were able to do this as most of the children were under 4. So some just scribbled and others joined the dots around the edge. The children were encouraged to make extra arms of the stars with other colours.

Creating line patterns on the star with the koki pen was more challenging but we ended up with some nice stars eventually.



This activity is best done at 3 tables but if this is not possible then do it over a few days as it's messy to do it on one table.

Theme: Day and night, Stars, Shape - star

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- A 4 white paper
- Pastels – it may work with wax crayons
- Paper for under the paper as it is messy
- Something to cover the table top
- Food colouring or school dye diluted – 3 colours
- Stars – pre-cut or the older children can cut their own out. It is quite hard for preschool children to manage
- Black koki pens or wax crayons
- Glue

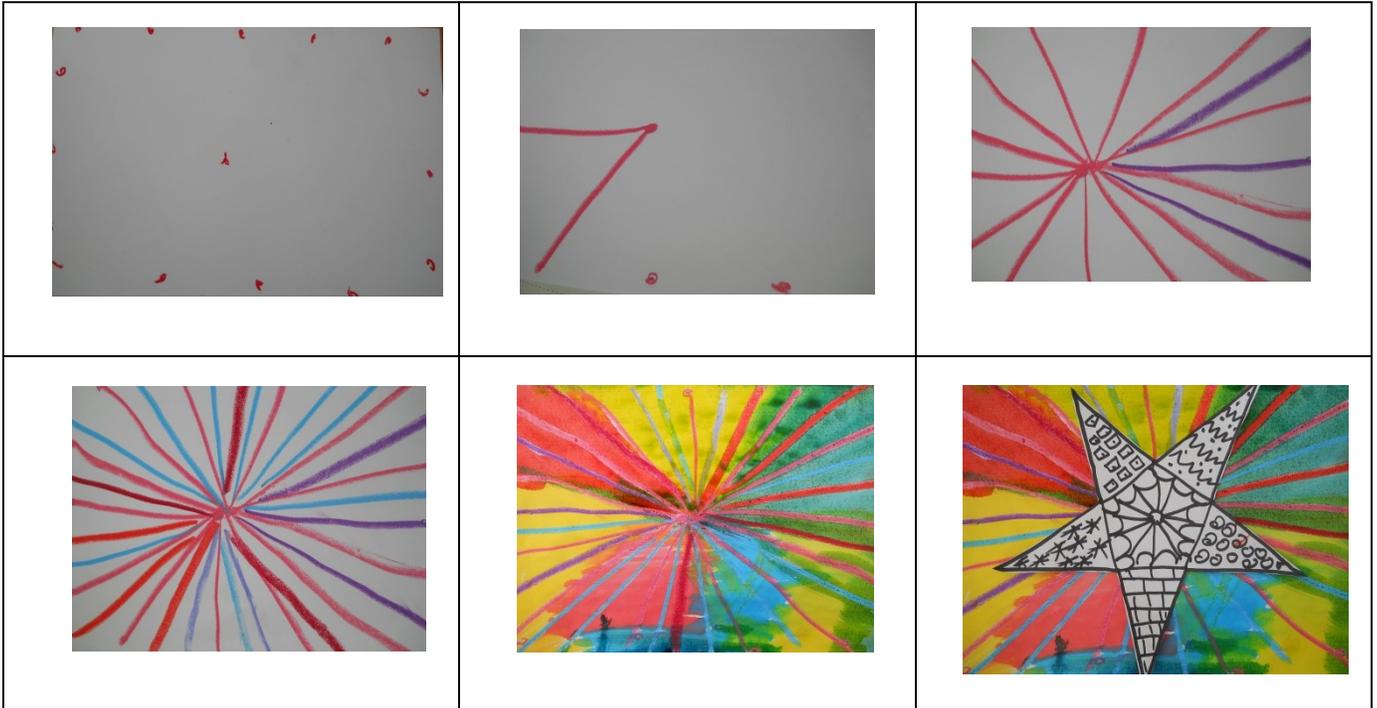
Method:

Teacher: Prepare the food colouring by diluting it and checking that it's not too dark over the pastels or wax crayons. Cut out a star for each child – I like to outline the star with a black edge.

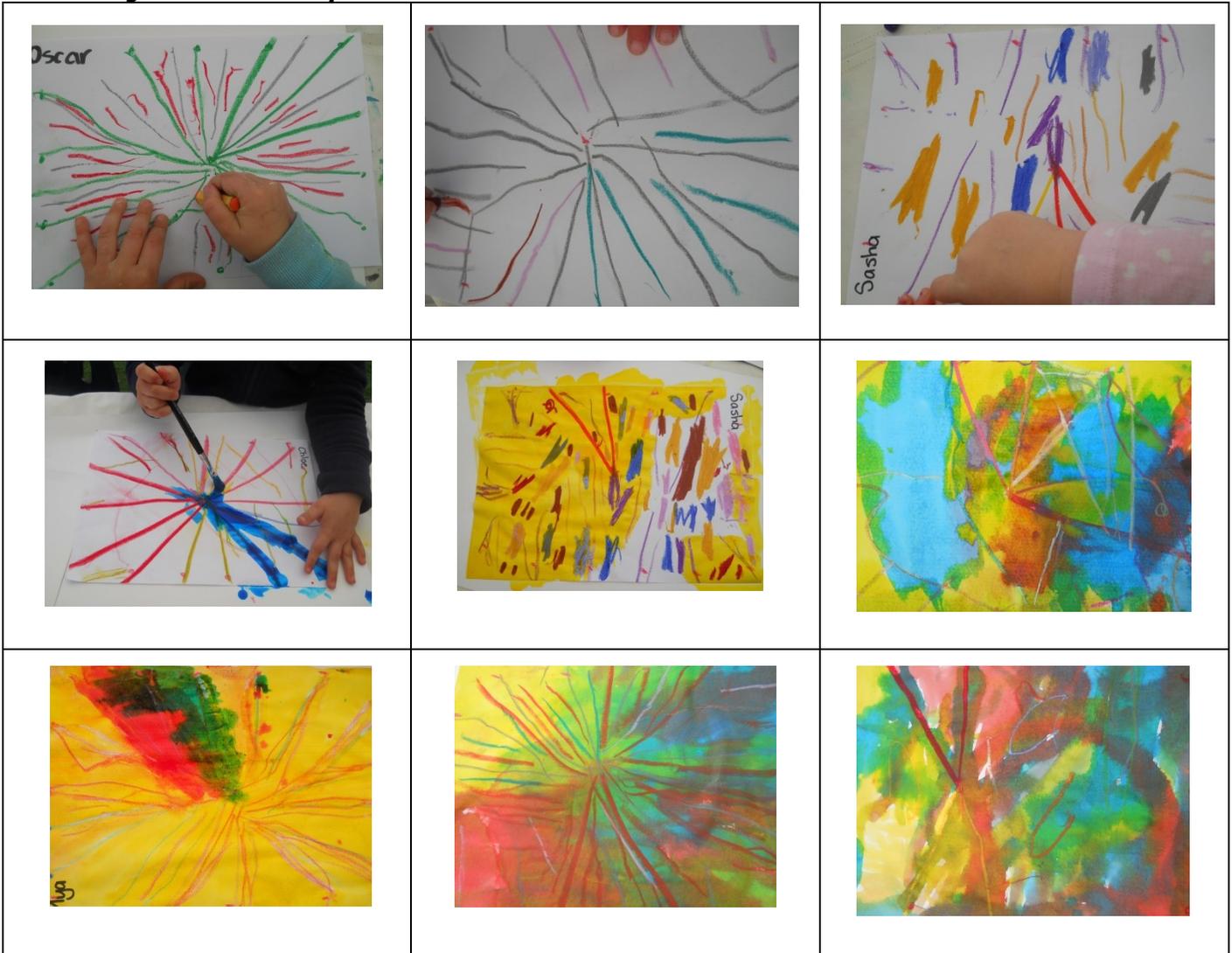
Child: Background: The child draws lines from the centre of the paper to one of the dots. This is repeated until a star has been created. The child paints over the lines using the food colouring and covers the whole paper. While it's drying the children create their stars.

Stars: The children draw lines, shapes and squiggles on the white paper star. The star is pasted to the dried background. I did this part for the children but if they are older they can do it themselves.

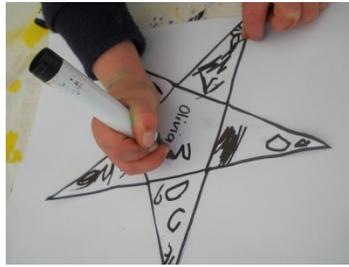
Star background as I had planned for



Star background as done by the children



Stars



The end product



Notes:

- Some of the younger children struggled to make a background star. They enjoyed colouring the paper with scribbles. It was still effective as can be seen above
- The paper gets quite wet when you colour wash over the crayons. I placed a larger paper under the A4 paper so we could lift the paper to the drying rack.
- Some children ended up colouring the stars a solid black instead of doing line drawings
- Grade R children can do writing patterns on their stars
- The food colouring colours get muddy towards the end of the activity as the colours merge on the paper. This can be prevented to a degree by only putting a little colouring in the paint pots so you can add fresh when it's consumed.
- The paint pots get knocked over so encourage them to keep the pots in the safe paint pot container.

Painting winter leaves



Happy teaching
Regards Karin