

Preschool Themes Newsletter – September 2017

Hello Everyone,

Dare I say spring is in the air! The blossom trees are all full of blossoms, the days are warmer and lighter for longer and it's time to plant the summer vegetables. I love this time of the year as there are so many lovely activities to do with the children at school. It also means we can have water play again which always keeps lots of children very happy.

We also celebrated daffodil day at school by making some daffodil art works and some daffodils to decorate the tables where the children eat their food. It's always fun to dress up and the children and teachers all came dressed in yellow and brought in coins to donate to the cancer organisation.



Creative activities

Daffodils – printing with forks and collage with paper

All the daffodils are in flower towards the end of August in NZ. We also have a big drive to collect funds for the cancer association called daffodil day. The daffodil is their chosen flower to represent the organisation. This is also a good time to do the colour yellow.

I wanted to do an art activity with the children that would not need too much teacher input and too much structure but still look like a daffodil. I contemplated using cut egg box segments for the flower centres but they really don't stick too well with white glue. I further contemplated attaching the flower centres ahead of time using a glue gun but decided that would be too teacher directed. Thinking through the smaller details of your activity can be the difference between a successful activity and one that may be frustrating and at times unsuccessful. Children get very frustrated when the collage items won't stick or fall off when they carry their picture to the drying rack. In the end I came up with using paper cupcake cases as they stick well, are inexpensive and sometimes you can even find yellow ones and printing the petals with forks. Cut petals from yellow paper would work well too.

Ideally you should look at a real daffodil in mat time so the children can observe the details such as the raised centres and the 6 petals and the long thin leaves. If you don't have access to a real flower then a picture will be fine. This concept can be used to print other flowers for different themes.



Themes: Flowers, gardens, colour yellow, spring

You will need:

- White paper
- Small or large cupcake paper cases – white or yellow
- Glue and glue brushes
- Green paper – cut into stems and leaves
- Earbuds – optional
- Yellow paint
- Plastic forks or kitchen forks

Method:

I placed a real daffodil in some water on the art table for the children to observe. The children place a bit of glue on the under surface of the cupcake case and attach it to the paper. Encourage the children to place this about 1/3 down from the top of the page. The children paint the BACK side of the fork, press it down close to the cupcake



case and give it a slight rock and lift. The fork will make a print. Repeat this repainting the back of the fork for each print and continue around the centre case. Encourage the children to turn and rotate their paper so they can make prints all the way around creating the petals for the flower. Technically a daffodil has 6 'petals' but I did not worry about this. Perhaps with the older children you could add this counting aspect to the activity. Optional: The children painted spots in the centre of the paper case using an earbud.



Notes:

- Remind the children to paint the back of the fork.
- Plastic forks were fine except some of them had a ridge so the tines of the fork did not touch the paper when printing. This resulted in a mess so check this before you start.
- A few children did not understand the concept of printing petals around the flower centre. This was because we don't work in the same way in NZ as SA so there was no discussion about the flower before the lesson (my biggest gripe about teaching in NZ!)
- Teach the children to put a thin layer of glue on the paper stems and leaves rather than the base paper as many do.
- The children wanted to make more than one picture and often the second picture is better than the first as they are beginning to master the technique and materials.



Other daffodil and flowers



Water 'glue' and painting

I saw this activity on Pinterest and had my doubts that it would work so I tested it ahead of time and was quite surprised to see how effective the concept was. Essentially when you want to paint around shapes on paper and then lift the shapes to see the white spaces between the painting, you need to presstick the shapes to the paper otherwise they move when the children painted them. The children struggle with using small pieces of presstick and it required quite a bit of my input to the activity. So when I saw this idea I was interested. The children wet the shape they wish to stick to the paper and being wet it adheres to the paper. Once a few shapes are placed, the children paint on and around the shapes. The wet shapes are easily lifted off and leave a white space between the paint.



Themes: Shapes, colours, dinosaurs, homes, my body

You will need:

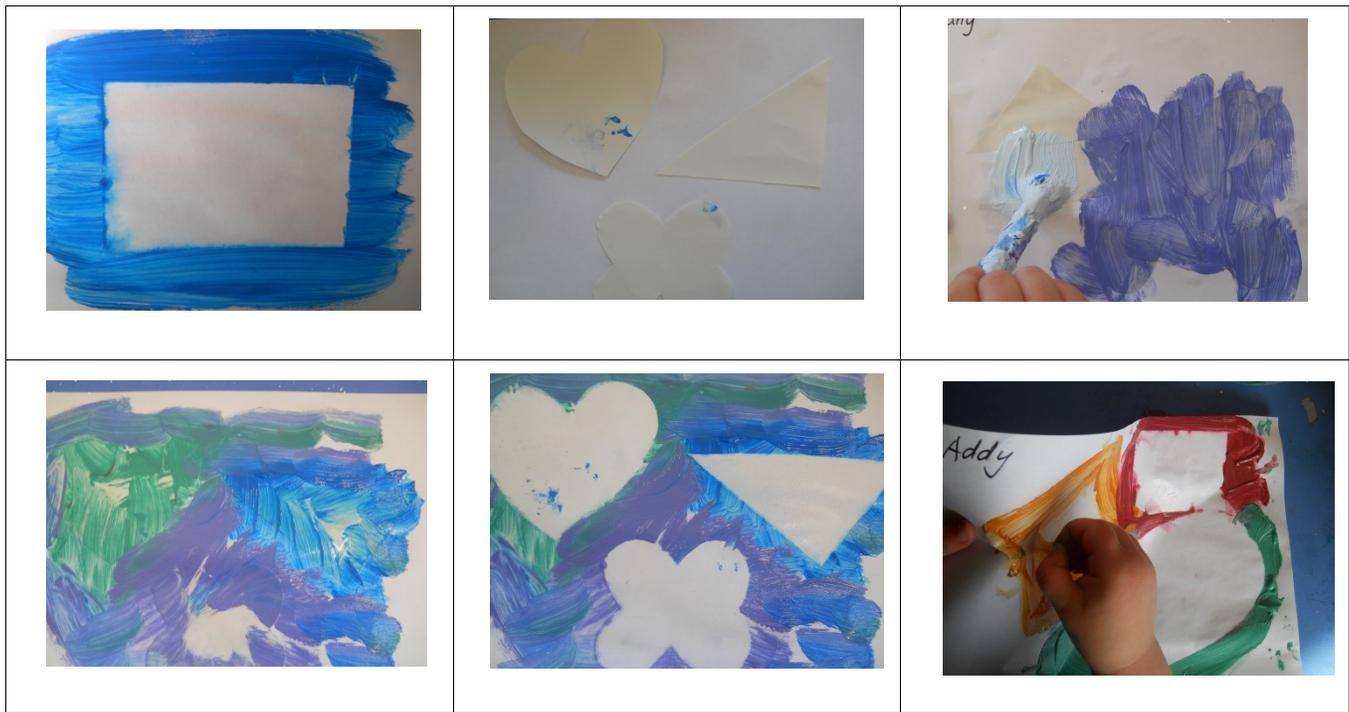
- White paper
- Paper shapes
- Flat container of water
- Paint
- Container for the wet shapes



Method:

The children selected the shapes they wished to use. They dipped the shapes, one at a time, into the water quickly and then placed the shapes on the base paper. The water makes the paper adhere to the base paper. The children painted around the shapes. Once the painting was complete the children lifted the wet shapes off the paper and discarded them. Pictures can be created by building up a shape using a range of shapes.





Notes:

- Remind the children not to leave the paper in the water too long.
- It is best if all the shapes are placed before they start painting.
- Older children can use shapes to create new pictures.
- Encourage the children to paint on the wet shape too and not only around the shape.
- Encourage the children to paint the whole page
- Don't make the shapes too big.

Tie dye painting on baby wet wipes

Themes: Baby, my family, health, caring for my body, colours, science

You will need:

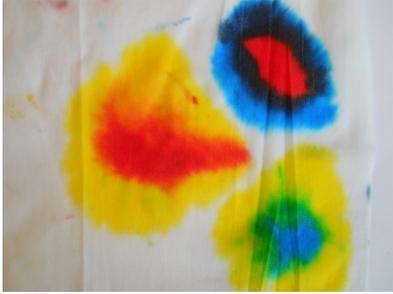
- Wet wipes
- Food colouring – diluted and tested before you put it out. –I prefer primary colours only so nice new colours are made
- Paint brushes preferably thin or it saturates the wet wipes
- Bottle tops
- Small elastic bands or washing pegs
- Something to cover the table
- Optional: Carlton roll or a cloth



Method:

The children placed a bottle top in the centre of the wet wipe and tied it with a small elastic band (Teacher may need to help several children). The children twisted the wet wipe and secured it with another elastic band. I think a washing peg would work better but I did not have any at school that day. The children painted the wet wipe with the diluted food colouring and then twisted it to make the colours blend. The elastic bands are removed and you have a beautiful pattern

Note: We tried this activity without using the bottle top and we still got lovely patterns. It was a lot less teacher intensive this way and is more suited to the younger children. We also just painted the wet wipe with the food colouring and watched the colours blend to make new colours.

		
		
		
<p>The wet wipe was folded and secured. This was a lot easier</p>	<p>The effect of painting the folded wet wipe</p>	<p>Painting the wet wipe to see the colours blend</p>

Notes:

- This is a messy activity so cover the table well and have a cloth to mop up the excess food colouring or school dye
- I gave each child a piece of paper to place at their work space to catch the drips and to dry the wet wipe on
- Place the diluted food colouring in safe paint containers to prevent spillage and mess
- If you have newish koki pens the children can colour on the wet wipe and the colours will run and blend
- No bottle tops – use stones or anything small
- The water should be in a flat container that the paper shape will fit into



Mittens using collage and painting

While winter is hopefully a thing of the past I am including this activity as it was such fun and could be applied to making and decorating other clothing items apart from the hand tracing.

For this activity I helped trace around the children's hands to create the mitten outlines. The children put their hand on the paper with their fingers closed, I traced a general mitten shape, the child removed their hand and I closed the mitten with a line and drew another to create a cuff for the 'snow'

We traced the right and left hand on one page. I used coloured paper but any paper is fine. With this activity I once again extended it to include as many skills as possible so we had collage and I added painting between the collage items which required more fine motor skills.



Themes: Winter, clothes, hands

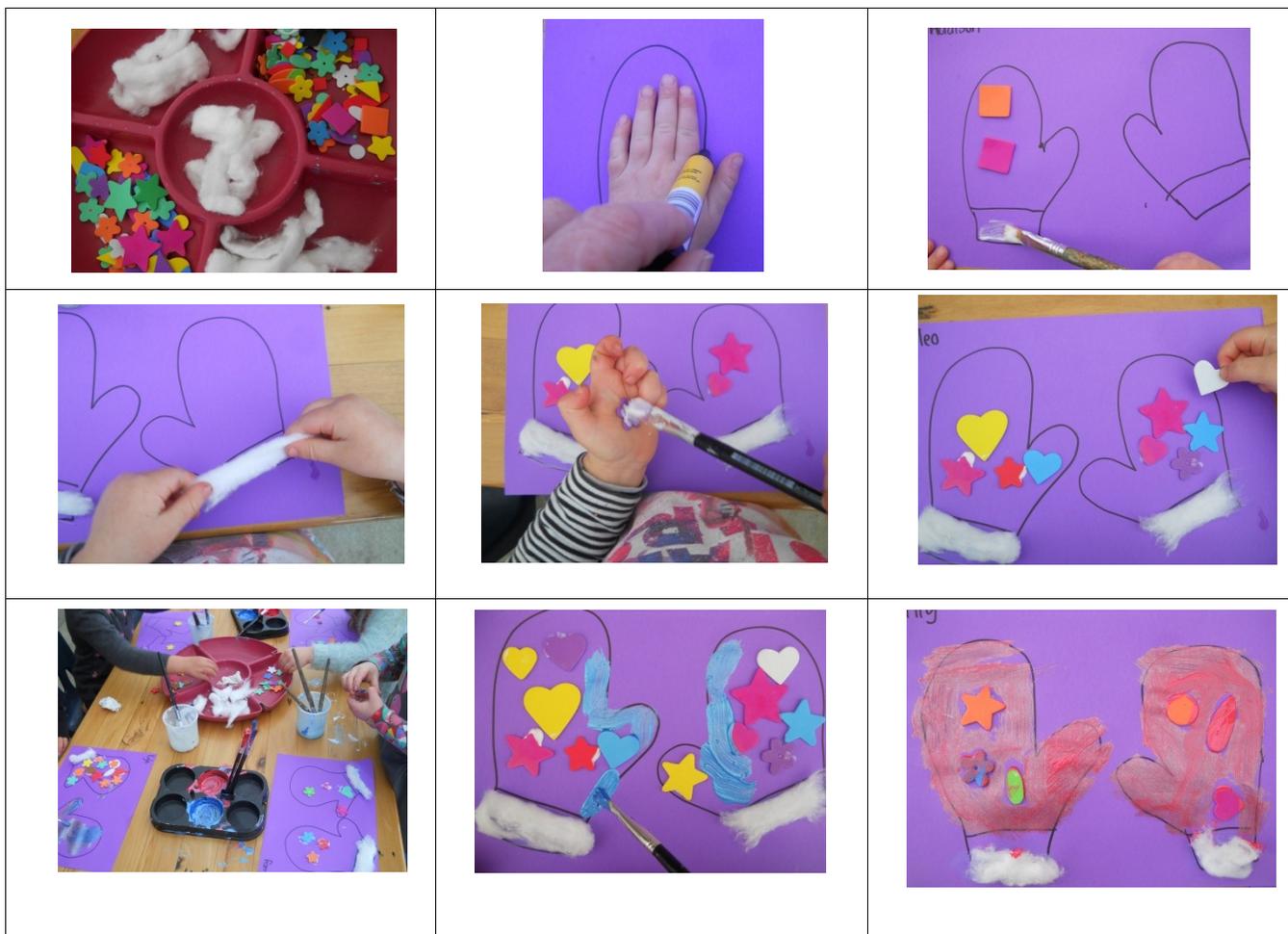
You will need:

- Paper – coloured or white
- Shapes or cut paper shapes for collage
- Paint
- Glue and glue brushes
- Cotton wool – balls or a roll. I unrolled the balls or pull off strips from the bigger roll.
- Teacher: marking pen or black wax crayon



Method:

The children put their hand on the paper and the teacher traces the hand outline for the left and right hand. The children added glue to the cuff and pasted some 'fur' cottonwool to the cuff of the mitten. They selected foam shapes to decorate the mittens. Encourage the children to put the glue on the shape and not to paint glue all over the mitten as they are inclined to do. Once decorated, the children carefully painted between the shapes and on the outlines. Older children could cut out the mittens once dry. At the end of the activity some children requested to make another picture and wanted to try and trace their own hand. This had varying degrees of success!



Notes:

- Some children struggled with the concept of the fur on the cuff. It was a good measuring activity to get the fur the correct length.
- Remind the children to complete the gluing before painting
- Finer paint brushes are more effective for painting carefully between the collage items
- Any collage materials will be effective. Small scraps of fabric or wool can be used if you don't have access to foam shapes

Printing on the child's name

I wrote the child's name in large letters on a sheet of paper. Any paper will do including newspaper. Some children have quite long names so you may need to use an A3 size paper.

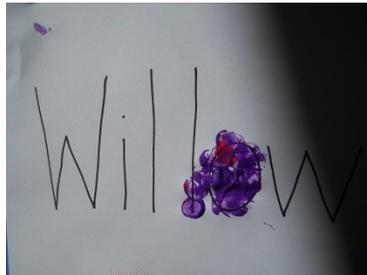
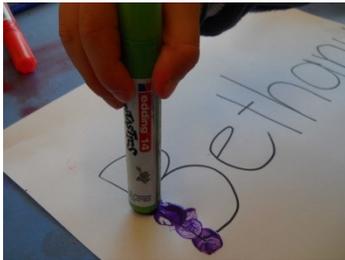
I used the back of our koki pens to print dots on the outlines. This worked really well. Anything with a round flat end will be effective; coloured pencils, wax crayons, dowel sticks or finger printing will be effective too.

You will need:

- Paper
- Koki pen or black wax crayon
- Paint on flat containers (I use ice cream lids) 2 colours
- Cloth

Method:

The children dipped the end of the koki pen into the paint and made a print on the outline of the letters. Make a dot at the beginning of the first letter so the children know where to start and it encourages them to work from left to right. Some children did really well with this activity while some of the younger children used the koki pens as paint brushes and just smeared the paint over the letters. So in light of this it's probably better to do this activity with the older children.



Practicing writing their names

I think it's good if children can write their own names. It is helpful to the teacher but it also gives them a sense of pride and self-esteem. Here the children are tracing over their name in dots, over the solid lines and then trying to write their own names.



Happy teaching

Regards Karin