

Preschool Themes Newsletter – May 2018

Hello Everyone,

Welcome back to term two. I hope you had some rest over the holidays and Easter break and the many April public holidays. The town I live in in New Zealand is known as the town of trees and many of them change to become covered in a beautiful display of autumn colours. Autumn is a lovely time to do art activities utilising the many leaves that fall from the trees. It's also a time to remind children to remove some of the layers of clothing as the day warms up.

Mother's Day is coming up on May 13th so I have included a separate attachment with some ideas. These are not my own ideas so please follow the link to get more information. I have a Pinterest board for more mothers' ideas. Happy Mother's day to all the wonderful moms! Know you are all loved and appreciated.



<https://www.pinterest.nz/kstedall/mothers-day-ideas/>

Perseveration and excessive behaviours

Every year you seem to get a child in the group that shows excessive behaviours. The child paints until there is a hole in the paper, puts way too much glue on their art works, overprints in the same place, uses two hands instead of one when creating, folds their art works into small squares, unfolds and refolds the art work etc. They may show excess in other areas such as eating five servings of food when they are not obese or hungry. They also tend to do many, many art works even up to 10 of the same activity.

Is this a red flag or not? Should you be concerned?

Personally I do think it can be a red flag and the behaviours should be noted and documented. It could be perseveration in which the child gets 'stuck' on one behaviour. In primary school this can be an issue as the child may get stuck on one concept and be unable to move on e.g. writing the answer to a sum and using the same answer for all the sums.

Can this excessive behaviour be changed? I do try and intervene and suggest to the child that they get another paper when the art work is getting too heavy but they seem unable to control their behaviour. Perhaps if left to continue this behaviour they will work it out of their system or mature and change? I don't have the answers. (The expected outcome of this art activity can be seen on the next page to put this into context)



In the art works above the child started with a lot of overprinting of the circles and even used two cups to print with at the same time. No one else at the table did this so one can take that to indicate that this behaviour is not normal (but very "normal" for this child as she always does this). I encouraged her to try and print the circles individually so she could paint them but she was intent on doing her own thing. She folded up each art work into a very small square unfolding and refolding several times. She often folds up her art works. Again no other children do this!

Creative activities

In New Zealand the age grouping of the preschool children is a bit different to most South African schools. Children don't start in a group at the beginning of the year. The grouping in New Zealand is children 2 to 3 ½ years and then 3 ½ to 5 years after which they go to primary school into a similar class like a Grade R class called a New Entrants class. So as soon as a child is of the age to go to the next group they move over. This means you have new children coming in throughout the year and at times the class can be younger children rather than older ones. At the centre I work at they have started a 4 ½ year old class for the children who will be going to school and for those who want to wait a bit longer before starting school at 5.

As a result of this new class I need to structure the creative activities to be more suitable for the younger children but at the same time still suitable and stimulating for the older children in the group. Quite a challenge!

Circle printing using cups and painting within the prints

Themes: Shapes, Circle, Transport and road safety – use three circles the same colour as a robot

You will need:

- Paper – white A4
- Paint – 3 colours in flat containers (2 litre ice cream lids are great)
- Polystyrene or plastic disposable drinking cups (see notes)
- Paint in paint pots – same colours as used for printing
- Paint brushes – thin and thick



Method:

The children dip the plastic cup into the paint on the flat container and place it carefully on their paper to make a print. The child repeats the printing using different colours and placing the circles close to each other on the page without overlapping the circles. The children can print part circles on the edge of the paper.

Once the printing of the circles is complete the children carefully fill the circles with the same colour paint taking care to stay inside the printed circle.

Note: The child in these photos was using her non dominant hand to paint as she had a broken arm.



Notes:

- Some children smeared the paint instead of printing clear circles
- A few children decided to colour the shapes with a different colour paint
- Some children overprinted the circles so it was not possible to paint them
- No disposable cups – use food tins (no sharp edges) or plastic drinking cups

		
Different colour painting in the printed circles	Circles not fully coloured or matching coloured paint	Overprinting so they cant be painted

Autumn trees with lid painted leaves and paper branches

Autumn is one of my favourite themes as there are so many lovely creative ways to make autumn trees and leaves. For this tree we used the technique of painting swirls with milk lids as the leaves. It's always best to have a mat time discussion about the shape of trees before you present this activity. If you have younger children in your group this can be done as a big group project with the teacher creating the tree and the children painting the leaves.

In the next activity we used the same technique to print a page of lovely autumn colours and used the painted page to draw hand shaped leaves which can also be used on a large group tree and as part of your autumn theme table display

**Theme: Autumn**

Other themes: Colours – red, yellow and orange, Trees, Leaves

Ages: 3 - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Brown paper – cut into tree trunks and branches
- Glue and glue brushes
- Paper – A 3
- Milk lids or similar
- Paint – red and yellow
- Flat container for the paint

**Method:**

Teacher: Cut the brown paper into sizes suitable for the tree trunk and branches (no brown paper – cut toilet rolls into strips for the branches and flatten whole toilet rolls for the tree trunk.)

The children select a tree trunk and paste it to the bottom of the paper. Remind the children to put the glue on the brown paper and not the base page. The children complete the bare tree branches selecting a variety of pieces of brown paper. The leaves are painted with the milk lids. Dip the flat base of the milk lid into the paint, place on the tree and press and turn at the same time to create a swirl of colour. By printing the colours over each other new colours are created.





Notes:

- Some children tried to paint with the lids and created big blobs of paint
- Some children preferred not to over print to create new colours
- Remind the children not to print the tree trunk
- Extra details can be added to the picture such as grass and sky
- Paint brushes were supplied to paint the bottom of the milk lids. Be aware that some children will use the paint brushes to paint instead of the milk lids
- Remind the children to put the glue on the brown paper and not on the white paper when creating the tree.



Extension of this activity

Another way of using the lid swirl painting is to paint a whole page of autumn colours. Once the paint is dry the children place their open hand on the paper and the teacher traces around the hand creating points at the finger tips to look like a hand shaped leaf. The children or teacher cut out the leaves. The leaves can be displayed as a mobile, or as part of a group tree display or just around a board or window. I used my own hand in these photos.





Wooden block painting with string and bead collage

I always find it's a bit of a challenge to get the boys to come and enjoy the creative activities I set out. I debated about my choice of white, purple and pink paint but decided to go with it anyway and I had more boys complete this activity than I expected. Of course the girls just loved the colours and the beads.

I found some really cheap beads and I had picked up a bag of 20 egg cups at a second hand shop which were ideal to use to dispense the beads. I think some of the children loved the little cup of beads the most of all in this activity – ha ha! (I use the egg cups for several other activities). Milk lids will be just as effective. If you don't ration the beads they will all be used by the first few children.

This activity falls quite nicely into the category of process art although not entirely in its pure form as there were still some guidelines given. The end results were all different.

Themes: Trees and wood

Ages: 3 ½ y- 5 year olds

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

You will need:

- Wooden blocks or thick cardboard
- Wool – thick and textured (can use string) in a flat container
- White glue – some coloured with yellow paint
- Beads – small and others
- Paint – white, purple and pink – thick and **with a bit of glue added**
- Painting tools such as rollers, sponges, dobbers etc
- Paint brushes
- Wooden sucker sticks for the glue (not glue brushes)
- Small container for the beads – egg cups or lids



Method:

Teacher: Place the wool or string in a flat container and add a good amount of glue to the string. Give it a good mix with a paint brush. Place a few beads into a small container for each child. Egg cups or milk lids are effective. This prevents the children from using too many beads. Colour the glue yellow with paint.

The children paint the block of wood using the paint brushes and the three colours of paint. Using a variety of tools the children spread the paint on the wood and creates patterns. Give the children enough time to enjoy these painting tools. They enjoy repainting and using the tools. The children select a few pieces of wool and arrange them on the wood. Using the sucker sticks the children drop blobs of glue on their wood block and sprinkle on some little beads and add some bigger beads. Leave to dry, preferably in the sun

Teacher - check that the wool is touching the wood and the beads are in the glue before setting aside to dry.



Notes:

- This activity can be done over several table
- No wood – use thick cardboard
- Some children did not spread the wool and some chose not to use the wool
- The glue for the beads needs to be sufficient so encourage blobs rather than smears of glue
- Wood off cuts can be obtained from building and hardware suppliers often free.

Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful moms

Regards

Karin

OMG
my mother
was right
about
everything..

There is no way
to be a
perfect mother.
but a million ways
to be a
good one.



LIFE DOESN'T
COME WITH A
MANUAL, IT
COMES WITH
A MOTHER

IF YOU ARE A
MOM,
YOU ARE A
SUPERHERO,
PERIOD.

ROSIE POPE

Mother

[Moth-er] -noun

1. One person who does the work of twenty. For free.

(see also 'Toony', 'saint')

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