

Preschool Themes Newsletter – November 2019

Hello Everyone,

Once again here we are at the end of another year and I hope you can look back on the year with joy and pride for how far you and the children have come. Now to just get through the last month and the many tasks that need to be completed before the year end break... I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being a part of the preschool themes newsletter journey. I hope you have enjoyed the many activities as much as I have enjoyed doing them with the children. As you have gathered my happy place is a table full of children happily engrossed in a creative activity and the joy on their faces when they show their parents what they have made. This will be the last newsletter for the year so I have included some ideas for Christmas activities.

While this is a little early I would like to wish you and your families a blessed and peaceful Christmas and we will be back in January 2020. Take care.



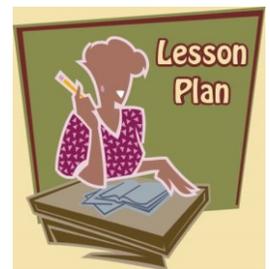
Preschool themes manuals www.preschoolthemes.co.za

Does your planning and preparation take up a lot of your time? Do you get stuck for ideas or just need some new inspiration. Then preschool themes are perfect for you. There are 44 theme titles to choose from with each theme manual containing a week of lessons and activities. Depending on the age of the children and your specific setting, the themes can be extended over two weeks.

Each theme manual costs R50 excluding postage/delivery. You can order any amount of books. If you choose to order 40 books or more the courier delivery fee is free and you receive your books in a plastic container to store them. (South Africa only)

The titles and more information with an on line order form can be found at www.preschoolthemes.co.za

The order goes directly to Groep 7 in Pretoria. A proforma invoice is sent out in response to the order and once payment is received the books are dispatched within a few days. We prefer to courier the books as the postal system is unreliable. The office will be open for most of December to receive orders for the new year.



To date over 98,000 theme manuals have been sold to schools and training organisations of a variety of settings.

Creative activities

Planning your art activities

When you plan an art activity there is always plenty to think about. One aspect I always consider carefully is what materials to use and the order of the activity. The flowers below were a perfect example of this. It was a toss-up between painting the petals versus colouring the petals. Ideally I think I would have liked to use paint to colour the petals but I realised that the painted paper petals would get heavy and possibly fall off the plate. Also the general age of the children in the group are 3 ½ years and they will often paint everything on the plate and not only the petals. Likewise even if we used the coloured paper petals and painted the centre that would also result in everything being painted. In thinking about the activity after it was completed I should have given the children a flattened coloured cupcake case to paste in the centre to fill the space and give it some colour and pasted the crumpled tissue paper around the centre. Never mind it was still a nice end product and I have noted it for next time. If you don't have coloured paper let the child do a free painting and cut the painted paper into petal shapes once dry. You can mix up the various colours.

Another aspect to be aware of is that sometimes things don't go according to plan and you need to make immediate changes

As I mentioned in the October newsletter (which can be read from the web site www.preschoolthemes.co.za) I was given a whole lot of plastic plates. So continuing on using the plates we made flowers. I quite liked the end product but I had to make a few changes during the activity as it was not working very well. Sometimes I have an idea and think it's going to be great and then discover it's either ineffective or frustrating the children. So I make the change immediately if I can to ensure the activity is successful. I had cut white tissue paper for the children to use in the centre of the flower as I did not have any yellow (yes poor planning on my behalf... I thought there was some in my art stash) and I thought they could colour it with koki pens. But it just looked silly. So I suggested the children make it into a little squashed ball and paste a few of those to the centre of the flower but it was very fiddly and with the children's sticky hands from gluing the tissue paper it just stuck everywhere except on the flower and was causing a lot of frustration. So I fetched some tissues which were much bigger and easier and squashed to a bigger blob which was easier to paste.



Paper plate flowers

Themes: Spring, Flowers, Garden visitors, Butterflies, Bees

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Small pieces of paper or I used circles of lightweight card I punched with a card making punch for drawing a bee or butterfly
- Something to draw with – pens, wax crayons, koki pens
- Paper or plastic plates – small
- Petals cut from lightweight card or paper (or use some of the children's art works)
- Glue and glue brushes
- Background paper optional
- Tissue for the centre

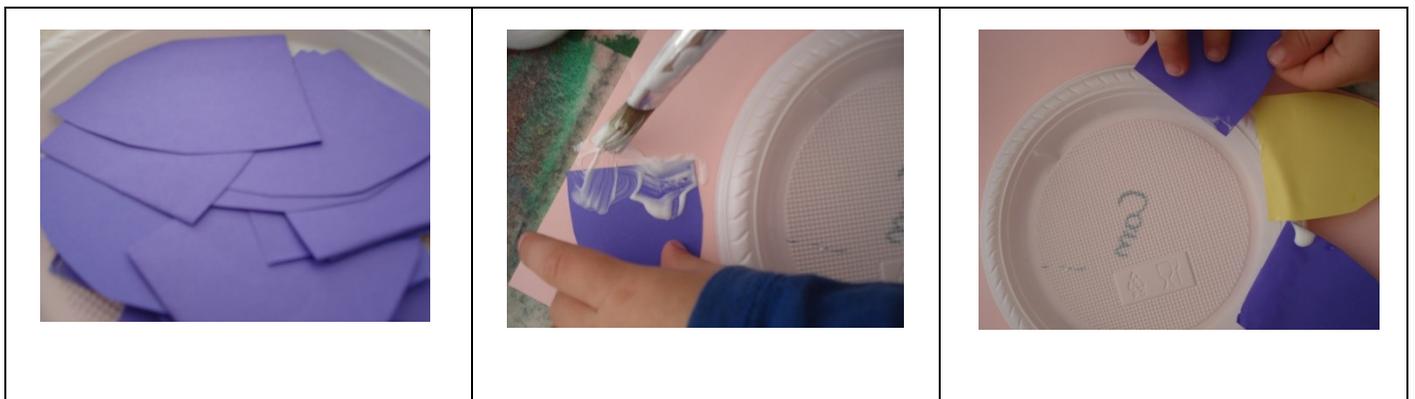


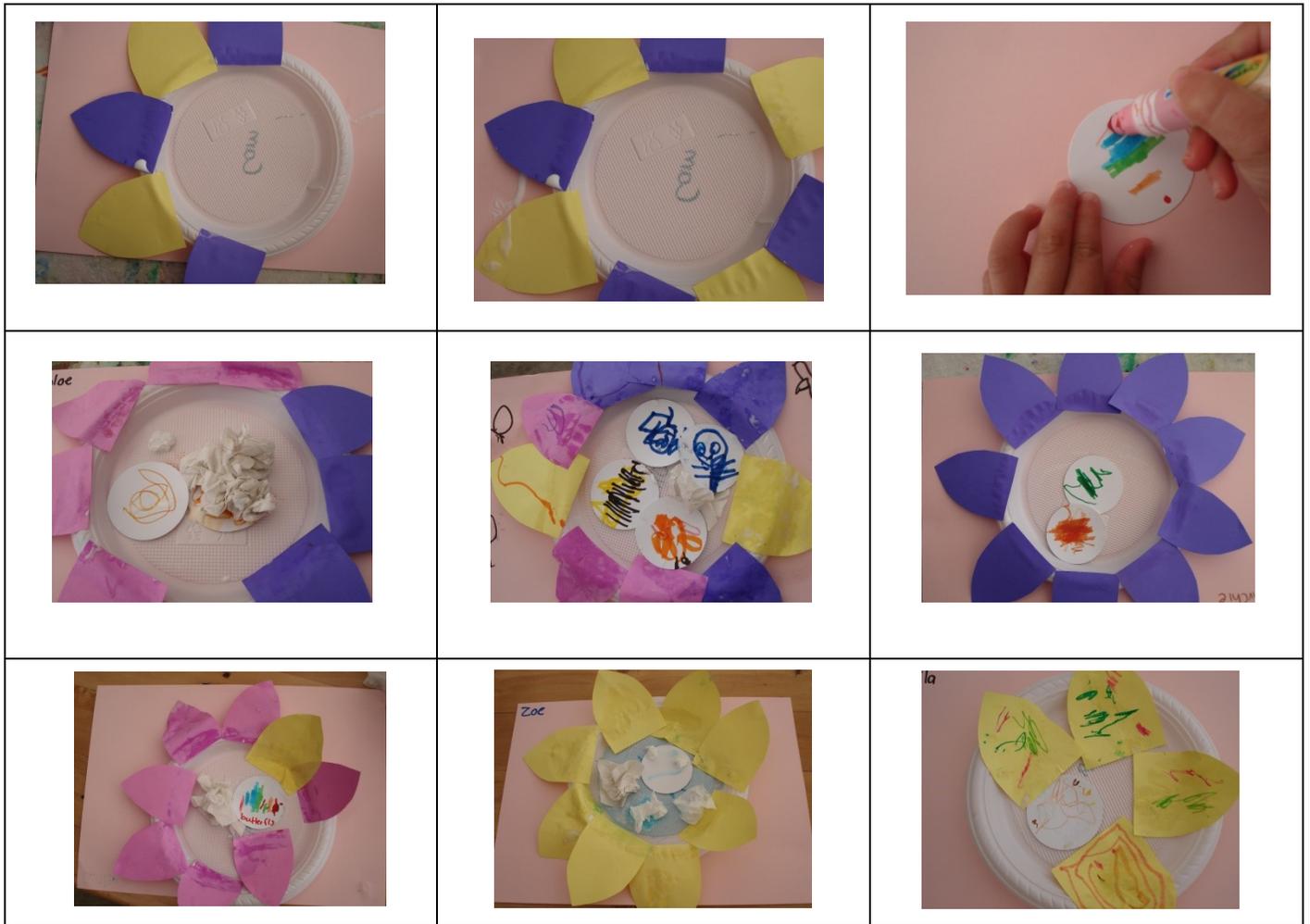
Method: Teacher: Prepare the petals. Paste the plastic or paper plate to the background paper or cardboard.

Child:

Optional: The children can draw patterns on the petals before they paste them.

The child glues one edge of the petal and pastes it to the rim of the plastic plate. The child continues to paste petals all the way around the edge. Some children chose one colour petal and some made a pattern as below. The child crumples the tissues into a small ball and pastes them to the centre of the plate. The child draws a bee or butterfly on the circle or square of paper and pastes it to the centre of the flower.





Notes:

- Some children pasted the petals in a random way
- Some children are in the scribble stage of drawing so their bee or butterfly was a scribble
- It would have looked nicer pasted to a painted background such as a leaf printed background
- Paper plates or cardboard circles will be effective too

Glad wrap squash painting and drawing with earbuds

I live in a small town in New Zealand and we have a Facebook page for our town on which people give away items they no longer need or want for free. I check this on a daily basis as I often get art materials for free. I got a box of catering sized 300 metres of glad wrap from the page and it's been great to use for art. The children are always fascinated with gladwrap painting - that they can spread the paint under the plastic and their hands stay clean – or should that read cleanish! Some children were a bit too enthusiastic and sometimes the plastic moved exposing the paint. And of course there are always those excessive children who somehow manage to get their hands covered in paint anyway.

Please note this activity needs ready mixed paint to be effective. It does not work well with mixed powder paint.



For this activity you need to put spoons in the paint and not paint brushes. The children use the spoons to drop blobs of paint on the paper. I used the primary colours red, blue and yellow so they would merge to make nice new colours and not just a messy brown. Once the paint has been blobbed on the paper and all three colours used the teacher covers the paint with the glad wrap. The child gently spreads the paint under the plastic merging the colours and covering the paper with paint. The glad wrap is gently lifted up

and removed and discarded. I then suggested the children drew their faces or themselves in the paint using an earbud. Using a finger to draw would be good too but then have something to wipe their hands close by. I loved the end result and the faces, people and families that some children drew. Once again the children in the scribble stage enjoyed creating scribbles in the paint. These paintings take a little while to dry. Have a dustbin handy to throw away the glad wrap once it is removed from the painting. It's messy.

Themes: Colours, Science – colour mixing, myself, my family

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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

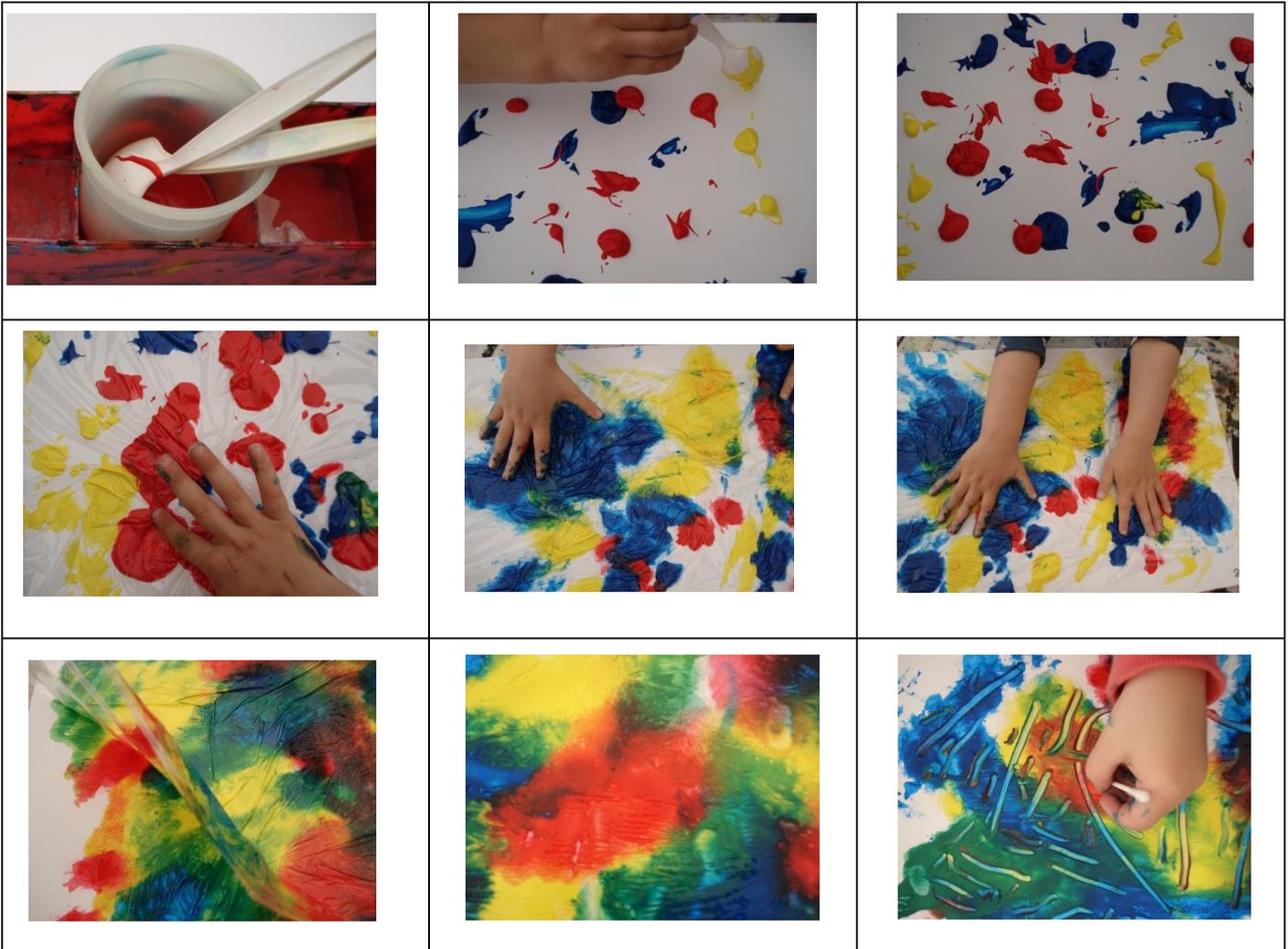
Materials:

- A3 paper – It can work on A4
- Ready mixed paint – I used primary colours red, blue and yellow
- Glad wrap
- Earbuds



Child: The child drops blobs of paint onto the paper using the teaspoons. The paint should preferably be ready mixed paint. Once completed the teacher covers the paint with a piece of glad wrap. The child gently spreads the paint under the plastic encouraging it to merge together creating new colours and covering the paper with paint. Once the paint is well spread and the page is well covered the child removes the plastic and discards it in the bin. Using the earbud or their finger the child draws a picture of their face or themselves.

Sorry I was having camera trouble so I did not get ideal photos hence my own example above





Notes:

- The children really enjoyed this activity and many boys did the creative activity which is always good
- It is quite teacher intensive as you have to put the gladwrap on for the child
- The gladwrap moves quite easily so the paint gets exposed
- Make sure the children put blobs of paint onto the paper and not just smears but too much smears off the paper
- Make sure you check that the paint is well spread under the gladwrap before pulling it off
- The younger children scribbled a picture (which is age appropriate) instead of drawing
- Instead of using earbuds to draw the child can do a drawing using their finger.

Ice cream cones with collage

Continuing on with using the plastic plates I was given I decided to make some ice creams and cones with the children. Because of the younger age group I now work with, I knew from previous experience that if I pasted or drew the triangle for the cone on the page the children would sprinkle the egg shells on everything and not only on the cone part of the ice cream. So I cut out cardboard triangles from cereal boxes for the cones. I cut the small plastic plates in half and using my special fabric glue pasted the triangle to the half paper plate. It should stick if you use school white glue but it will need a day to dry ahead of time.

I saved egg shells from my cooking and washed and dried them. I gave each child about 4 egg shells in a plastic plate with a metal spoon and showed them how to crush the egg shells. Once they were broken down a bit I encouraged them to use their hands to break them to be smaller pieces. The eggshells were pasted to the cone part of the ice cream. The egg shells can be painted brown but this is best done by doing the activity over two days – cone and ice cream. I didn't paint the cone as I did not have two days and the egg shells were quite brown.

The ice cream part was created by crumpling tissues into balls and pasting them to the plastic plate. Once done the ice cream part is painted.



Themes: Shape – triangle and half circle, summer, food, opposites – hot and cold, rough and smooth, Milk – dairy products, five senses – egg shell texture

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Paper plates or plastic plates – small - cut in half – paper plates actually stick better.
- Cereal boxes – cut into triangle cones (you can get 4 per box)
- Glue and glue brushes
- Tissues
- Paint
- Small bowls and metal spoons
- Optional: red cardboard circles for cherries for the top of the ice cream.

Teacher: Prepare the cardboard cones

Child: Ice cream cone: The child covers the cardboard cone with a good layer of glue and sprinkles the crushed egg shells onto the glue. Tip off the excess eggshells into a flat container or tray. Check that the cone is well covered with eggshells and add more if needed.

Child: Ice-cream: The child takes a tissue and lightly crumples it into a ball. The child puts a big blob of glue on the paper/plastic plate and secures the tissue pressing it down into the glue. Repeat until the paper/plastic plate is well covered with tissue blobs. The child paints the tissue and I added a cherry (red cardboard circle) to the ice cream.

Optional: The ice creams can be pasted to a background paper but the children will paint this background if this is done with the paint on the table. If you don't want this to happen then paste the ice creams to a background paper later.



Notes:

- Some children struggled to crush the egg shells which actually surprised me
- If you don't have paper plates just cut some large cardboard circles from cereal boxes
- Some children tried to put the egg shells on one by one instead of sprinkling it on
- Make sure the children use enough glue
- Some children took several tissues and crumpled them at the same time which just made big ugly blobs
- This is quite a messy activity. We ended up with eggshells everywhere!
- A few children were over enthusiastic with the painting but the end product was still effective.



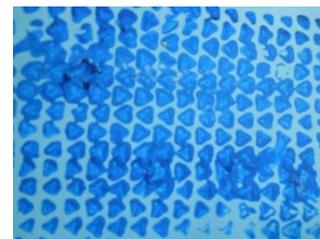
Boats using plastic meat trays

This activity was done using some textured plastic trays that meat comes in from the supermarket in New Zealand. I am not sure if you get the same plastic trays in SA. If not then use polystyrene trays for the boat and create the background using bubble wrap as in the next activity.



I used a blue background but it can be white.

Initially I did not plan for the plastic tray to become a boat but one child suggested the idea so I ran with it. I drew squares on a paper for them to draw their family members who would be in the boat. They cut along the lines and these were pasted into the boat. Depending on the age of the children you can offer them small squares to draw on instead of letting them cut along the lines. A few of the younger children did end up just cutting their people into lots of little pieces! If you have little plastic bags or bowls it's a good idea to use them to keep the pieces together while they complete the rest of the activity.



It is important that you draw first before the children's hands get messy with the paint.

Themes: Water, water transport, water recreation, summer, colour blue, recycling

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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



Materials:

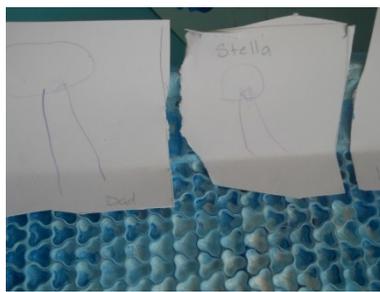
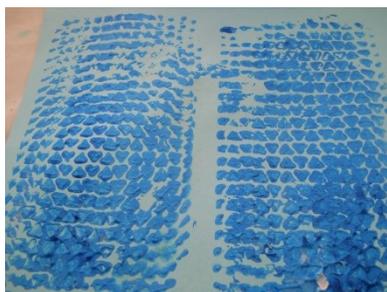
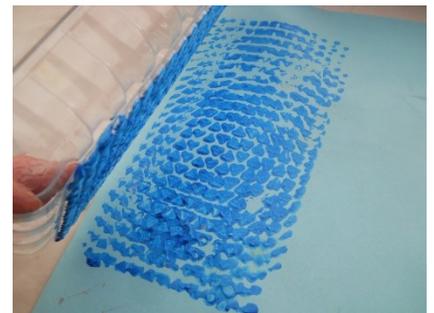
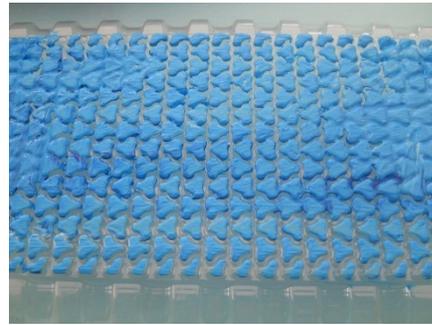
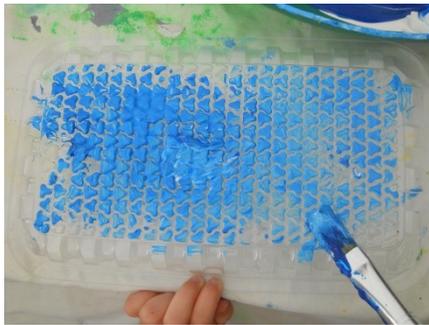
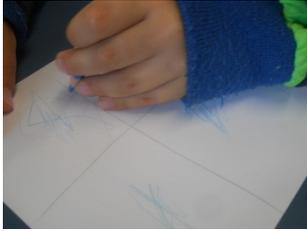
- Paper – blue or white
- Blue and white paint
- Plastic meat trays
- Small pieces of paper or A5 paper with lines drawn on them to make about 6 blocks
- Drawing materials – koki pens or wax crayons or pencil crayons
- Glue and glue brushes
- Scissors

Teacher: Cut some small paper squares or draw squares on the paper

Child: Using the small pieces of paper or the paper with blocks, the child draws pictures of their family one per piece or blocks. Cut out if necessary. Place in a packet or container and set aside to make the background and the boat.

The child paints the base of the plastic meat tray and places it down on the background paper pressing it down to create a textured print. Make sure all areas are pressed to the paper. This is repeated until the background is well covered. The plastic meat tray is glued to the water background. The pieces are secured around the edge of the boat. It helps to bend the bottom edge of the paper so it's sitting in the meat tray (look at the photos) Make sure the children use plenty of glue and dry the construction flat. It takes a while for the glue to dry. Some of the boats did pop off the next day as insufficient glue was used.

Optional: Write the names of the people under the drawing (emergent writing)



- Discourage the children from painting over the printed background or using their hands to smear the paint. If it happens its okay – you just end up with a variation of the background.

Notes:

- Some children used an excessive amount of paint which didn't give a clean print
- It's best for the children to stand when pressing the meat tray to make a print
- Make sure the meat trays fit onto the paper size you have chosen
- Meat trays can be cut in half but the plastic edges can be quite sharp
- Not all the children could draw people so they scribbled
- Add white paint to the blue paint or have white and blue paint for the children to mix as they paint and print
- The boys really enjoyed this activity

Happy teaching

Regards Karin

a scribble
ISN'T
A SCRIBBLE...

It's a story, a name, a word,
a masterpiece.

