

Preschool Themes Newsletter – September 2019

Hello Everyone,

Happy Spring Day to you all. It is lovely to finally have spring here with the gardens full of daffodils and the trees are covered in blossoms. The fields are full of playful lambs and there is a renewed energy all around. I love seeing the new growth on the trees after the bare months of winter. All this inspires many opportunities for themes and creative activities at school. In this newsletter there is a big focus on daffodils as we have the annual Hospice fund raiser appeal at the end of August with the daffodil as their symbol. So everywhere we look there are daffodils for sale and collection boxes at all the shops in town. And our classroom looked so fresh with all the yellow art on the walls.



Creative activities

Daffodils

With it being the annual Hospice daffodil day appeal and lovely daffodils popping up in everyone's gardens and fields we made some daffodils with the children. While researching the various activities on Pinterest and google I was very aware that most of the daffodils were very teacher directed and not very suitable for children to make on their own. So I decided I would focus on some process art to create the yellow paper I would be cutting into daffodil shaped flowers and this would satisfy my need for the activity to be child orientated. This activity can be applied to any other theme that needs a yellow background such as weather – sunny, seasons – summer etc

Several activities use egg boxes for the flowers which is fine, but in my own experience children can't cut egg boxes with school scissors and the egg boxes are quite hard to get completely covered with yellow paint. The egg boxes also suck up a lot of the paint. Don't make the mistake I once did and thought I would add more water to the powder paint thinking it would go further but it just made the egg boxes so wet it all fell to pieces! Another point to note is that the regular white school glue doesn't hold the egg boxes very well so the pieces fall off the art work.

Many of these activities and processes can be applied to other themes and creative activities

Yellow collage – to create yellow paper for our daffodils (Extension of the activity in last month's newsletter)

For this activity I set out a variety of yellow collage materials and invited the children to paste the collage material on their paper leaving spaces between the pasted items. The children then painted the white spaces with yellow paint. The yellow art creation is cut for the base of the daffodil.

Themes: Colour yellow, Flowers, Weather - sunshine

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, cut up cardboard shapes, cut up feathers,



tissue paper squares, crepe paper squares or streamers, yellow buttons or anything you have in your classroom. I did not put out wool pieces as they don't glue very easily.

- Glue and glue brushes
- Paint – yellow
- Flower centre – yellow cupcake cases or painted egg box indents
- Optional: Gold glitter



Method: Teacher: Prepare the collage materials

Child: The child selects some collage materials and pastes the pieces to the paper. Once there is a fair amount of collage on the page the child carefully paints around the pasted items filling in the white spaces with yellow paint. If preferred the teacher can lightly sprinkle gold glitter on the wet paint. Once dried, cut out the flower shape to create a daffodil. The centre of the daffodil is created from the yellow paper cupcake cases or a small bowl. A stem of green cardboard is added and the flowers can be displayed



Notes:

- Some children painted over the collage materials instead of around and between them
- The fabric squares tend to stick together if you cut them with several layers so try and separate them before you set them out
- Some children chose to crumple the tissue and crepe paper into small balls
- Encourage the child to put the glue on the collage material and not on the paper
- This activity was enjoyed by all the children especially the younger children.

Daffodils - Paper plates with coloured flour – Process art

For some variety I used paper plates for the base of these daffodils. I added glue to the paint and the children sprinkled coloured flour onto the wet paint/glue mixture. The centre is made from a paper cupcake casing and the stem is a straw or stick.

For fun we created the grass by painting a paper plate green which I folded in half and cut a small hole in the top for the stem of the daffodil to go in.

Themes: Colour – yellow, spring, flowers, gardens, growth, hands (background)

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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



Materials: Flower

- Paper plates – 1 small per child
- Paint – dry yellow powder paint
- Paint – yellow paint mixed with glue
- Flour and spoons (in a flat container)
- Optional: Flat containers to collect the excess flour
- Cupcake paper cases – yellow colouring
- Sostie stick or chopstick for stem (Cellotape)
- Flower template



Materials: Green base

- Paper plates – 1 small per child
- Paint – green paint mixed with glue
- Green paper strips
- Scissors

Materials: Green background – Hand printing

- Paint – green paint
- Long sheet of paper – no white paper use newspaper
- Plastic lids for the paint –plastic Ice cream container lids are perfect

Teacher: Add some dry powder paint to the flour and stir well. Prepare the green paper strips. Add glue to the paint. Cut out the flower shapes and attach the stick stem before the child paints the flower.

(Cellotape doesn't stick if there is paint on the back of the paper plate so it's best done ahead of time on a clean plate)

Important: fold the paper plate in half before the child paints- it's much easier to staple later.

Child: Flower The child paints the daffodil flower yellow and sprinkles yellow flour onto the wet paint /glue. The excess flour is shaken off. A cupcake centre is glued to the middle of the flower.

Green grass: The child paints the underside of the paper plate with the green paint / glue. The child snips the green paper strips into smaller pieces allowing the pieces to fall onto the wet paint/glue.

Teacher: Once the green paper plate is dry, fold the paper plate on the fold and staple the paper plate together to insert the stick of the flower into the hole. (See the picture above)





The group wall display



Notes:

- The hand printing background did not go as I had planned but it was enjoyed by many children and it was certainly a very sensory activity for several of them.
- I wanted clean hand prints but many of the children got carried away and smeared the paint not only on the paper but all over both hands. So be aware that this could well happen and have a bucket of water and a towel handy.

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| Smeared hand prints | Many children got stuck in and used both hands to spread the paint | Some children loved the sensation of the smooth paint on their hands and rubbed them together |
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Extension of the above activity – Coloured flour pictures

The children wanted to paint and use the coloured flour so I set out some paper and they enjoyed using the paint and coloured flour. I suggested they made faces so I drew them circles to get started. These children are 3 to 3 1/2 years old so this age really enjoys just using the materials rather than making a recognizable picture. By changing the colour of the flour you can use this process for other themes too.

This is quite a messy activity so cover the table and have flat containers to tip the excess flour into. Don't use different coloured flour as it just gets all mixed up and makes a mess.



Themes: Colour – yellow, Me and my body, Food, My home – the kitchen, five senses

Ages: 3 1/2 - 5 year olds

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

Materials:

- Background paper A3 – I used a slightly heavier paper to carry the weight of the paint and flour
- Paint – dry yellow powder paint
- Paint – yellow paint mixed with glue
- Flour and spoons (in a flat container)
- Plastic spoons
- Optional: Flat containers to collect the excess flour

Teacher: Add some dry powder paint to the flour and stir well

Child: The child paints a picture using the yellow paint glue mixture. Using the spoons, the child sprinkles yellow coloured flour onto the wet paint and tips off the excess flour (they may need some teacher help at this point) If you wish to make faces draw the circle for the children if they are young. Older children can manage on their own



Notes:

- Some children used an excessive amount of flour
- Some children used the flour spoons to spread the flour and it became a flour glue

Collage using the off cuts of the paper plates saved from cutting the daffodil shapes



This is a great example of process art whereby the materials are placed on the table and the children create as they choose. I had saved all the pieces of the off cuts after I cut the daffodil shapes from the paper plates so I put them out for the children to create a collage as they pleased. I added some paint to the table and away they went creating.

Themes: Water and water transport, dinosaurs,
Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds
Skills: Large muscles, small muscles

Materials:

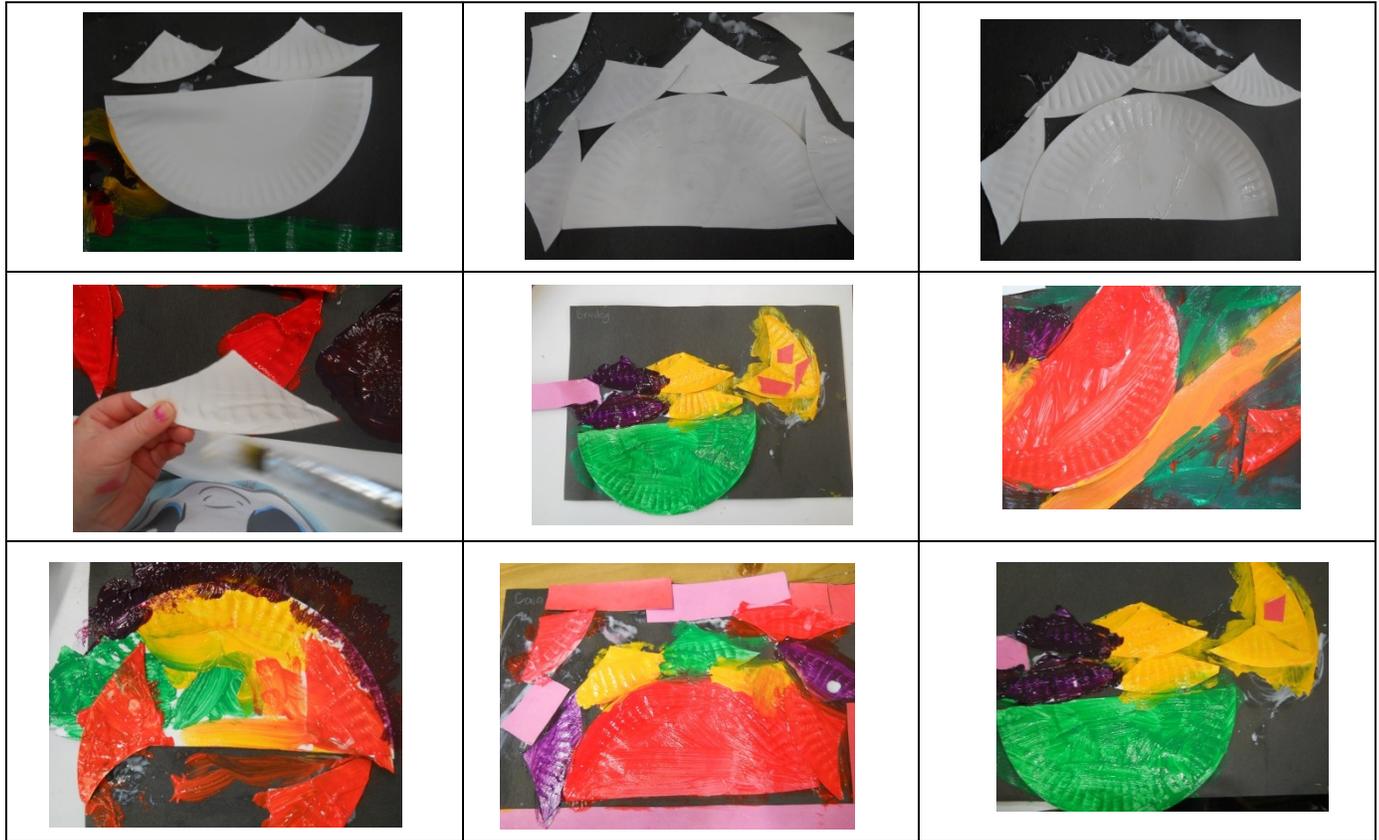
- Paper plate off cuts (I added some half paper plates too)
- Glue and glue brushes
- Paint
- Paper –any colour is fine
- Strips of coloured paper (leftover from another activity)
- Optional – scissors (sometimes this can be a bad idea as they just sit and cut up the pieces)



Method:

Teacher: Prepare the materials

Child: The child selects the collage materials of their choice and creates a collage. The child may choose to add paint and/or cut the pieces into different shapes. Some children were able to name their collages such as "I created a boat and some made dinosaurs"



Notes:

- Mostly the teachers struggle with this activity as they want to interfere and suggest ideas to the children but its really all about free collage and enjoying the materials.

Daffodils using cupcake paper cases

This activity is probably better suited to the slightly older children. It's best to do this activity at two separate tables or over two days. I did it on one day and it was fine. Some children did not really understand the concept that the hand printing was the grass so I got hand prints all over the picture. If the children are younger they can do a hand printed green background as described earlier in the newsletter and use that as the background for the collage or just paint grass at the bottom of the page leaving out the hand printing. Hand printing is a very messy activity that needs supervision irrespective of the age of the children and can quickly escalate into paint going everywhere!!



Theme: Colour yellow, flowers, spring, gardens

Ages: 3 ½ - 5 year olds

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



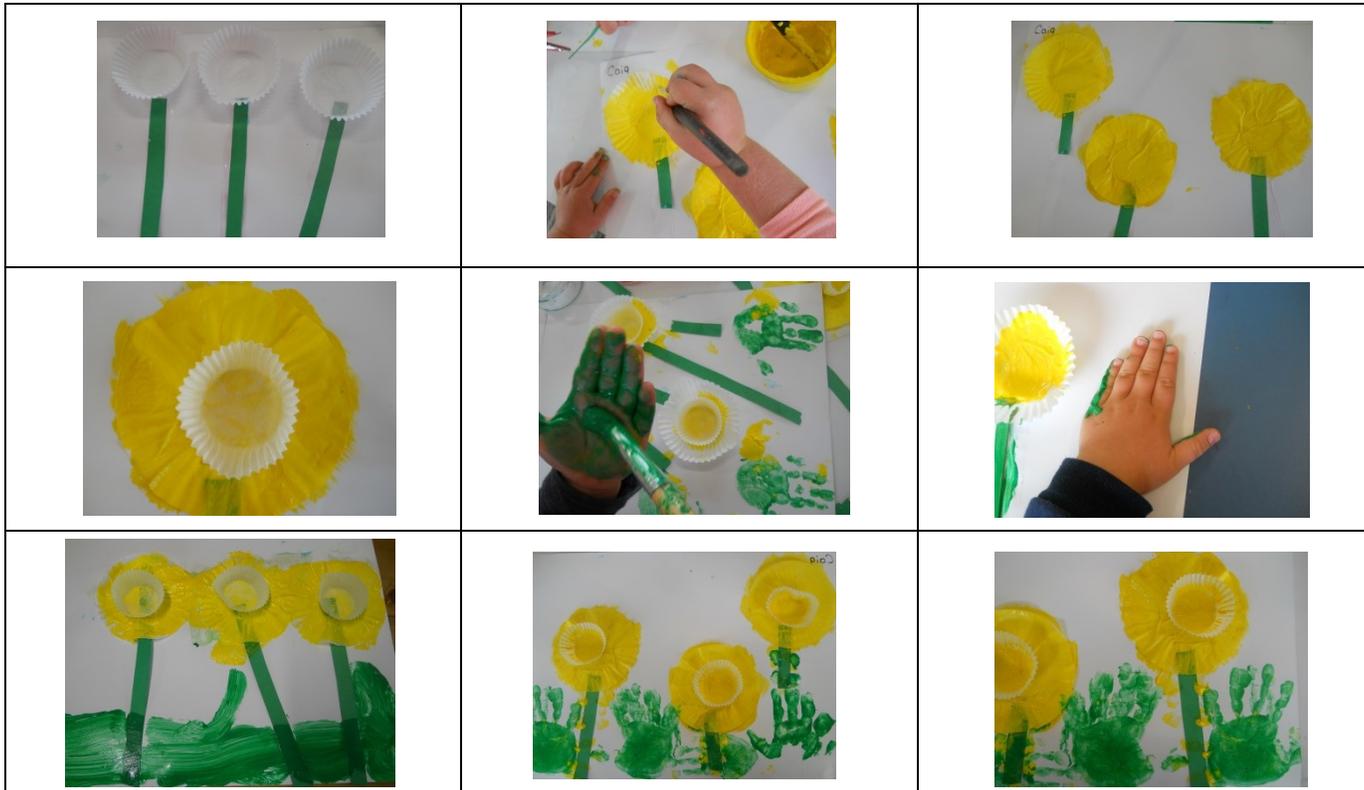
Materials:

- Paper
- Glue

- Paper cupcake cases – white large and small (sometimes called muffin cases)
- Paint – yellow
- Paint – green on flat containers or with paint brushes

Method:

Child: The child pastes three cupcake cases on the page for the daffodil flowers and adds a green stem. The child paints the cupcake cases yellow. Paste a small cupcake case to the centre of the flower. Hand print green grass along the base or paint grass.



Wooden sucker sticks can be used instead of green paper but I found paper worked better. The sucker sticks don't stick well.



It was very sweet to see one of the children helping a younger child by painting her hands for her so she could do the hand printing. Ideally I prefer the child to only paint one hand



If you cant find small muffin cases get the children to paint egg boxes yellow and cut the segments apart. Just note that they don't stick well and the painting will need to be dried flat.

**Happy teaching
Regards Karin**

