

Helps and Hints

Family Child Care Newsletter

Childhood Services

Arkansas State

University

2009

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Inside this issue:

Art & Creativity

Sing, Song, Sway

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Sensory

Special Section

And much more!



SPRING



Many changes in nature occur during the spring months. In places where the weather was cold during the winter months, it begins to warm causing plants to grow once again. Spring flowers brighten gardens, trees bud, and the grass starts to turn green. Gardens and fields are planted as people become involved in outside activities during this season. Because of the warm weather, animals and insects that were dormant also reappear. In some areas, rain and wind occur more frequently. Spring rainstorms are caused by a sudden change in the temperature. In this newsletter on the spring season, there are activities which will help young children observe changes that occur at this time of year. Experience with plants and seeds, insects, spiders and earthworms, and spring weather are included.



Start planning now!

10th Annual

Family Child Care Conference

May 8-9, 2009

Holiday Inn Holedome

Jonesboro, Arkansas

More information on page 33



Parent Involvement

Invite parents who have vegetable or flower gardens to share their experiences with children at daycare.

Ask local weatherpersons to visit your center.

Ask parents to donate live plants that children can cultivate. These plants may be used for food experiments or to beautify the classroom or outside.

Note: All plants donated to centers must be checked to assure they are not poisonous or toxic. The Arkansas Poison and Drug Information Center telephone is 1-800-376-4766.



Extra Helpers

Open the Door Let's Explore
By: Rhonda Readleaf

The Outside Play and Learning Book
Activities for Young Children
By: Karen Milley

April Pattern, Projects & Plants
By: Imogeve Forte

An additional resource that you might
find helpful for this and any other
units:

www.preschoolexpress.com





Circle (Group) Time

What's Missing? Place articles used when it rains in the middle of a circle of children. Identify each one. Have children close eyes. Remove one. Guess which one.

Word cards: Make word cards by printing names of item seen or used during spring (i.e. clouds, rain, umbrella etc.) Identify each with a picture or sticker. Laminate. Use as a choice activity with markers, pencils etc. for copying words or drawing pictures.

Clouds, Clouds, Rain: Similar to duck, duck, goose but each child says clouds, clouds, etc. and when touches and says "rain" child chases first player.

Pretend: Supply pretend area with ponchos, boots, rain hats, safe children's umbrellas, and confetti. Put confetti in small container and pretend it is raining. (Children will pick up confetti endlessly)

What's in the Mystery Bag? At the beginning of discussion of rain, place one item used when it rains in the Mystery Bag. Have children feel and try to guess what it is. Use a different item each day.

Waterplay: Pour water in commercial water table or dish pans/cat litter trays. Use a small amount of dishwashing soap if desired. Add rotary beaters, measuring cups, wire whisks, funnels, breakers, plastic containers, meat besters, or any item which is made of unbreakable plastic. Allow children to experiment with various items.

Bubbles: Purchase commercial big bubble wands. Make mixture of: 1/2 gallon water, 1/2 Dawn, 1/4 cups Karo syrup. Place in shallow pan. Have child dip wand in water and run.

Bubbles in a Bowl: Pour 1/2 cups of water and 1/2 teaspoons of liquid soap in a small bowl (butter tubs work well). Place straw in bowl. Blow. Add food coloring or when mound of bubble appear place white sheet of construction paper over bubbles for design on paper.





Circle (Group) Time

Water Plant: Fill plastic container with water. Use flat type brush to paint sidewalk, fence etc.

Catch a Firefly: Children stand in a circle with lights off. Teacher flashes light from flashlight around circle saying, "Catch a firefly...now let it go."

Bug Bingo: Use insect stickers to make bingo boards. Have the children mark the pictures with small plastic flies.

Spin the Bottle: Child spins the bottle and names the insect that the bottle is pointing to.

Insect Race: Divide the children into two equal, sit-down circles. When the children are given the signal, they begin passing a rubber insect or spider around. As soon as the bug gets all the way around the children in the circle stand up. Repeat until both teams have a chance to stand up first.

Insect Prepo: Using a plastic insect, children are given instructions using prepositional phrases. (i.e. put the insect under the table, on the floor...) Can be used as a dismissal from group time.

Roly-Poly: Have the children crawl on the floor and pretend to be a roly-poly. When the teacher touches him, he should roll into a tight ball. When the teacher leaves, stretch out and begin to crawl again.

Buggy Guessing Game: Place the following parts from Cootie by Schaper Manufacturing Company in a bag: six legs, two antennas, one head, and one body. Remove one part from the bag at a time. Attempt to guess what the finished product will be. When completely assembled discuss names and functions of the parts. Count number of legs. Variation: instead of Cootie cut legs, antennas, head, and body from felt. Attach to flannel board.

Ladybug Race: Place marble inside of walnut shell of ladybug. Hold two ladybugs on the raised end of inclined board. Release. Marbles will roll, moving ladybugs down the board. **Activity for School Age.**





Art & Creativity

Insect Antennae: Decorate a paper head band with markers and add fringed paper or pipe cleaners to make antennae's.

Ladybugs: Paint ladybugs at the easels, with red and black paint. Add different things to paint for different textures—to one pint of tempera, add 1 Tbsp. of flour for lumpy texture; for gritty, add 1/2 tsp. sand; for slippery, 1 Tbsp. Karo syrup; for rough, add 1 Tbsp. cornmeal; for shiny, add 1/2 cups sugar.

Clothespin Butterflies: Have children drop different colors of food coloring diluted with water on a coffee filter or paper towel and watch it spread. Hang it up to dry. Pinch it together in the middle and slip it into the slot of an old-fashioned, round clothespin. A short piece of pipe cleaner can be added for an antennae.

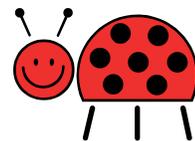
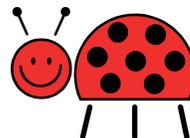
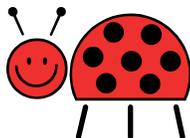
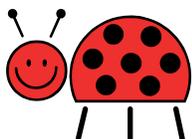
Foot Butterflies: Let children step in paint and then step on paper to make butterfly wings. Let dry. Add body and antennae with yarn or markers or crayons. Variation: Trace around children's feet. Have them decorate their foot butterflies with wallpaper scraps or colored Elmer's glue or pieces of ribbon, etc.

Play Dough Bugs: Create a bug my using play dough for the body. Attach toothpicks, pipe cleaners, or paper strips for legs, wings, and antennae's.

Finger-paint: While children are finger-painting, play the record "Flight of the Bumble Bee." Suggest that they might pretend their fingers are bumblebees buzzing around bushes or chasing something.

Stained-glass Butterfly: Let the children scrape crayon shavings on a butterfly or bug-shaped piece of wax paper, cover with another piece of wax paper, and press with an iron set at low heat. Variation: mount melted crayon pictures under a butterfly or bug-shaped mat opening.

Thumbprint Insects: Let children make thumbprints using an ink pad. Let them use crayons or markers to add legs and antennae's, etc.





Art & Creativity

Easel Shapes: Cut insect, spider or earthworm shapes out of large easel paper. Let the children decorate it with markers or paint.

Insect Templates: Templates can be purchased or made by tracing a shape with glue. Allow the glue to dry on a piece of cardboard. Place a plain sheet of paper on top and use crayons to rub.

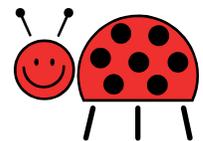
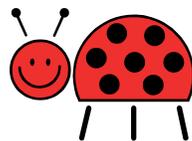
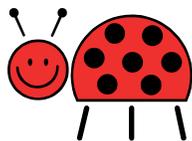
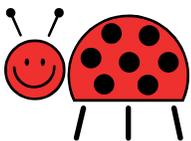
Insect Stamp: Insect stamps can be purchased or make your own from a stamp sheet. Use markers to color background.

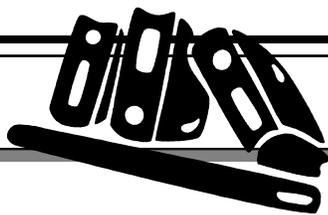
Butterfly Blot: Fold piece of construction paper in half. Open. Drop bright colors of paint onto one half of paper. Close paper and press. Open. Variation: Use brown or black paint to make bugs.

Clay Earthworms: Put clay or play dough out on table for children to use. Encourage children to make earthworms. Ask, "What do you think an earthworm looks like?" (Make a ball of clay.) Does he look like this? The children's conversation may reveal their impressions about the earthworm.

Earthworm Painting: Set out bowls of thin red, yellow, and blue paint and newsprint. Direct children to pick up the earthworm by one end and dip into paint. Place on paper and watch him wiggle, squirm, and slide across the paper. Discuss how he moves. (This does not hurt worms, but wash and return the container if worms become less active.) Allow children to help bathe the worms in cool water. Explain that water does not hurt the earthworm because its body needs to be damp. If we let the paint dry on the earthworm it would die.

Straw Paint Worm: Dab a bit of thin paint on an earthworm shape and blow it around through a straw.





Language Arts

What's Missing?: Place pictures of insects face up on a table or the floor. Have children identify each picture. Shuffle pictures and remove one. Have children tell which insect is missing. Say: 1-2-3 open your eyes. What is missing? Who's so wise?

Little Miss Muffet: Provide props to act out this nursery rhyme. Use a pillow for a tuffet, a bowl and spoon for curds and whey, and a rubber spider on a string. Have children take turns being Miss Muffet and the spider while the rest of the class repeats the rhyme.

Sequencing: Read The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle. Discuss the metamorphosis of the caterpillar to the butterfly. Have pictures of the varying stages of the butterfly's life cycle. Have the children sequence these.

Copying: Make word cards by writing the names of insects on sentence strips. Identify each one with a corresponding sticker to picture each insect. Have the children draw pictures and/or copy the names of the insects with markers, crayons, or colored pencils. This is available for children who want to try it.

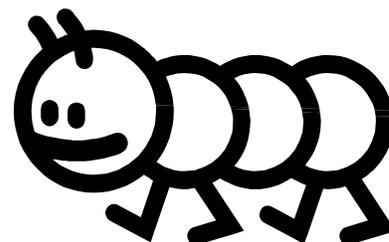
Three of These Things Belong Together: Display four items, of which three relate to insects, spiders or earthworms and one which does not. Children tell which ones belong together and why. For example: butterfly, grasshopper, ant, bird.

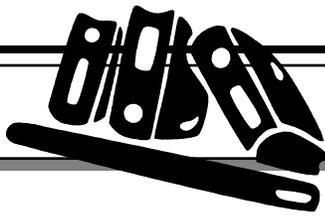
Insect Books: The children draw or paste pictures of their favorite insects and dictate stories about them.

Dot-to-Dot: Children can complete the insect shape from a dotted insect. To make your own, lay a sheet of paper on top of a picture of an insect. Instead of a line, make dots. Copy this off.

Insect Picture and Name Puzzle Match: Provide a picture of an insect with the name written on it. Have letters available for children to copy the name.

Clouds: A cloud is made of many tiny droplets of water. It can also be formed of ice particles. Both are suspended in the air. Observe clouds. In what ways are they the same? In what ways are they different? What do they look like? What do they tell us?





Language Arts

Cloud Formations:

- A. **Cirrus:** A type of cloud composed of white, fleecy patches or bands, found at heights of about seven miles above the earth. Circus clouds are composed of ice crystals. Circus clouds often precede rain or snow.
- B. **Cumulus:** A dense, white, fluffy cloud that billows upward from a flat base and occurs at an average height of about 2 miles.
- C. **Cumulonimbus:** A very dense cloud with massive projections that billows upward. It occurs at an average height of about 4 miles and usually produces heavy rains, thunderstorms, or hailstorms.
- D. **Stratus:** A cloud that resembles a horizontal layer of fog, found typically at an altitude of about 1,300 to 1,500 feet.
- E. **Nimbostratus:** A gray, often dark cloud found typically at a height of about 1/4 miles above the earth and usually dropping rain, sleet, or snow.
- F. **Fog:** A cloud like mass of condensed water vapor lying close to the surface of the ground or water.

Rain: Water that condenses from vapor in the atmosphere and falls to the earth as drops.

- A. What does rain feel like?
- B. How do you feel when it rains?
- C. What do you think of when it rains?
- D. What do you do when it rains?
- E. What do you wear when it rains?
- F. Why does it rain?
- G. What happens to the rain?
- H. Drizzle, sprinkle, shower, down pour



Rainbow: An arc-shaped spectrum of color seen in the sky opposite the sun, especially after rain, caused by sunlight refracted by droplets of water.

Hail: Water that falls to earth as pellets of ice or snow, usually during thunderstorms. Hail is formed when an ice crystal falls from a cloud into warm air and gathers water droplets. It is then swept into upper freezing air, and a layer of ice is frozen around the crystal.



In mixed aged children select activities that are appropriate for all children.



Sing, Song, Sway

Floating Clouds: (Tune-"Frere Jacques")

Clouds are floating, clouds are floating,
Up so high, up so high,
Floating up above us, floating up above us,
In the sky, in the sky.

Clare Cherry

It's Raining, It's Pouring:

It's raining, it's pouring;
The old man is snoring.
He bumped his head, and he went to bed
And he couldn't get up in the morning.

Traditional

Rain, Rain Go Away:

Rain, rain go away.
Come again some other day.
Little Johnny wants to play.

Traditional

Thunder: (Tune-"Frere Jacques")

I hear thunder. I hear thunder. (stamp feet on floor)
Hark, don't you? Hark, don't you? (place hand behind ear)
Pitter patter raindrops, pitter patter raindrops, (wiggle fingers downward)
I'm wet through. (shake body)
So are you. (point to friend)

Traditional

March winds and April showers, (flutter hands sideways and then downward)
Popping up are pretty flowers. (raise hands above head)
A kite flying in the sun. (form diamond with hands)
Aren't you glad that spring's begun? (point to a friend)

What's fluffy white and floats up high (point upward)
Like piles of ice cream in the sky? (rub stomach)
And when the wind blows hard and strong, (move hands slowly through air)
What brings the rain? (flutter fingers downward)
What brings the snow? (flutter fingers downward)
That showers down on us below? (point to friends or shelf)

Author Unknown





Sing, Song, Sway

Raindrops are such funny things (flutter fingers downward)
They haven't feet or haven't wings. (point to feet, pretend to fly)
Yet they sail through the air
With the greatest of ease. (flutter fingers downward)
And dance on the street
Wherever they please. (move fingers as if dancing)

Mary Jackson Ellis
Frances Lyons



Spring

Trees are budding (stretch arms above head)
The grass is green (point to ground)
Flower blossoms I have seen (form circle with arms above head, sway)
The days are warm
By evening it cools
It's time to find the garden tools.

Seeds

Seeds, seeds, of every size,
They come in white, yellow and brown.
Some are flat, some oval, some round (hold hand flat, form oval then circle)
A seed so very small
Could grow a plant very tall. (raise hand above head)
The seed's color, shape, and size
Give no clues to the plant to rise. (shake head sideways)

Plant A Seed

I dig a hole and plant a seed (pretend to plant a seed)
Cover it with dirt and pull a weed (pretend to pull a weed)
Down comes the rain and out comes the sun (flutter fingers, form circle)
Up grows my plant, Oh! What fun! (pretend to grow)

Yellow Polka Dots

Yellow polka dots in the grass so green (form small circles)
Dad makes a fuss and says, "You're not to be seen" (shake finger)
But I'd like to say, (point finger at self)
"Dandelions make a neat bouquet" (pretend to pick and make bouquet)





Sing, Song, Sway

The Gardener Plants the Seeds (Tune—"The Farmer In The Dell")

The gardener plants the seeds.

The gardener plants the seeds.

Hi-ho the derry-o

The gardener plants the seeds.

Second verse—The rain falls on the ground.

Third verse—The sun shines bright and warm.

Fourth verse—The seeds begin to grow.

Fifth verse—Flowers grow everywhere.



Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow (Traditional)

Oats, peas, beans and barley grow. (hold hands in circle clockwise)

Oats, peas, beans and barley grow.

Oats, peas, beans and barley grow.

Can you or I or anyone know

How oats, peas, beans and barley grow?

First the farmer sows his seed. (pretend to plant seeds)

Then he stands and takes his ease. (stand and place hands on hips)

Stamp his feet and clasp his hands (stamp feet and clap hands)

And turns around to view the land. (turn around)

A Little Seed

There was a little seed

It was very small indeed

But it makes a little plant

And it grew and grew and grew.

The plant became a vine.

It had blossoms 89

While this tale is very strange

It's true, it's true, it's true!





Sing, Song, Sway

The Sleepy Seed

The tiny seed slept on the ground beneath a leafy cover. (rest closed hand on table).
Until one day the sun did say, "Wake up, it's time for summer!" (hold right fist (sun) over
left hand and pretend to knock)

The seed was tired so he snuggles up close beside his brothers. (wiggle fingers on left
hand)

The sun got mad and called the wind, who blew off all the covers! (wave right hand for
wind, remove "covers" (left hand)

My Garden

This is my garden (extend one hand forward, palm up)

I'll rake it with care, (making raking motion on palm with 3 fingers of other hand)

And then some flower seed (make planting motion with thumb and index finger)

I'll plant in there.

The sun will shine (make circle above head)

And the rain will fall (let fingers flutter down)

And my garden will blossom (cup hands together; extend upwards slowly)

And grow straight and tall.

Dandelion

I'm a yellow dandelion (point to self)

Which grows upon the ground (squat down)

And when I turn to fluffy white (slowly rise)

Seeds flutter all around. (flutter fingers)

Little Seed

Little seed in the ground below (form a small ball with
body)

Felt the warmth and the warm suns glow (rub hands over
arms)

Heard the rain drops go pitter patter (place hand behind
ear)

Wondered why the birds did chatter (hand on head,
curious)

So the seed began to grow (pretend to grow)

And poked it's head up very slow (lift head)

What it saw was such a sight (rub eyes)





Sing, Song, Sway

Thunder crashes. (clap hands)

Lightening flashes. (move hands in air with zigzag motion)

Rain makes puddles, (flutter fingers)

So I can make splashes. (jump)

"Pitter, patter, pitter, patter,"

Hear the raindrops chatter. (tap fingers on floor)

Raindrops water trees and flowers (extend arms above head)

For oh, so many hours.

But soon the raindrops will go away

So we can go outside to splash and play. (jump)

One spring day the big round sun (firm circle in air)

Winked at a cloud just for fun. (wink)

That dark gray cloud thundered and cried, (rub eyes)

Scattering raindrops on all outside. (flutter fingers)

But when the sun peeked out from a sunset low (form circle)

Together they both made a gay rainbow! (form arch with arms)

Raindrops fell from the clouds one day. (flutter fingers)

The sun peeked out and made a rainbow gay. (form arch with arms)

Raindrops fell on Lee.

Raindrops fell on Paul. (flutter fingers)

But they didn't fall on Sarabella: (shake head sideways)

She had a huge umbrella. (pretend to hold umbrella above head)

It rains on the duck, cow, and horse.

It rains on the trees and leaves, of course! (flutter fingers)

It rains on a little girl and fella. (point to girl and boy)

But I'm not wet. I have an umbrella! (place hands over head)





Sing, Song, Sway

Rain: (Tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

I like the rain; the funny tails
That puddle in the water pails.

I like the sidewalk wet and sleek
I like to watch the gutters leak!

But best of all is mud that goes
In little squeezes through my toes!

Falling Rain (Tune: "Farmer in the Dell")

The rain in falling on the roof,
And on the ships at sea.
And if I don't go in the house
The rain will fall on me.

I don't catch cold on rainy days
With puddles in the street
A big umbrella's over me,
And rubbers on my feet.



Three Little Ladybugs:

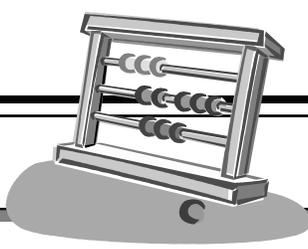
One little ladybug (children holds up one finger)
With spots on it's wings;
Landed right beside me (children tap sides)
As I played on the swings.

Two little ladybugs (child holds up two fingers)
Flew around a flower, (children move two fingers in a circle)
Then crawled beneath a leaf (children cup one hand over two fingers)
To nap for half an hour. (children lay their heads on their hands)

Fuzzy Wuzzy Caterpillar

Fuzzy wuzzy caterpillar
Into a corner will creep. (make fingers creep)
He'll spin himself a blanket,
And then go fast asleep. (rest head on hands. Close eyes.)
Fuzzy wuzzy caterpillar

Wakes up by and by (children awaken.)
To find he has wings of beauty
Changed to a butterfly.



Math and Manipulative

Bug Shapes: Make templates by cutting a shape from the middle of a lid or construction paper. Make several sizes of each shape. Hold template on paper and draw around inside of shape. Create bug by combining shapes or adding legs and antennae's with crayons or markers.

Ladybug: On flannel board, place ladybug that does not have any spots. Ask child to place a certain number of spots on the ladybug. For example: "Put four spots on the ladybug." Remove spots and continue, using a different number.

Inchworm: Place face of inchworm on flannel board or bulletin board. Give each child a different colored circle. Help the inchworm grow by adding your circle to the worm when that color is named. Variation: Place numbers or letters on circles. Count the number of circles and measure the worm.

Caterpillars: Make caterpillars out of fat and thin green pipe cleaners. Make counting boards by cutting green leaf shapes and putting a butterfly note pad picture on each shape. Write numerals on each leaf and put the correct number of caterpillars on each leaf.

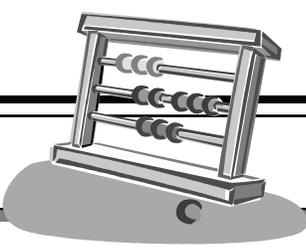
Insect Sets: Provide a paper with numerals down one side. Make sets of insects of corresponding size with insect stamps.

Insect Dots: Using stickers of insects place them on small cards with dots ranging from one to ten. On the back of the cards add magnetic tape. The children count the dots and place the card on a numbered coffee can which has been covered with contact paper.

Insect Squiggle: Tape five insects on the chalkboard. Have children hide their eyes. Another child puts a squiggle behind one of the insects. The children opens their eyes and use ordinal numbers to guess where the squiggle is. (First, second,....)

Measure Me: Have pictures of different insects, spiders and earthworms to measure. How many unifix cubes long is a bee? How wide is a spider?





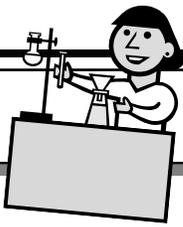
Math and Manipulative

Peg Games: Make cards with numerals printed on one end. Using insect stickers, put the number of insects needed on cards. Laminate and use a hole punch at the top of each card. Children then count the insects and hand the card on the correct number card. (Variation: Alike and different)

Divide a pizza cardboard into equal segments. Put stickers or pictures of plants, flowers, seeds in each segment. Each segment should have a different number of items. Cover with clear contact paper. Take spring clothes pins and put a number on them corresponding to the segments on the board. The children then clip clothes pins on appropriate segment.

Draw or make flowers with varying numbers of petals. Make flower centers with corresponding numeral. Child matches the pairs.

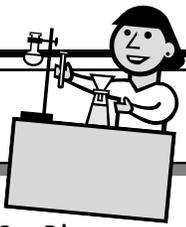




Science

Children need opportunities to develop scientific skills of observation, classification, comparison, discovery, and problem solving.

1. **Collections:** An insect or spider collection can be displayed along with books to help identify these creatures.
2. **Bees:** Display a collection of honey bees and a honeycomb. Use a magnifying glass to observe honey in the honeycomb. Taste honey. The bees nest is called a comb. It is made of six-sided cells that are wax. Beeswax is used for candles, floor waxes, ointments and in lipstick. Display some of these items or pictures of them.
3. **Nature Walk:** Go on a walk in a nature area to look for insects or spiders and their homes.
4. **Creature Display:** Display creatures that have been collected in bug catchers. Look at insects with magnifying glass. Observe similarities and differences.
5. **Bug Catchers: (Group Project)** Collect insects in any of the following:
Tuna Can Catcher or panty hose over shaped coat hanger: Use two tuna cans. Remove labels and one lid from each can. Cut a wire screen that is 6'x12'. Fold each edge of screen approximately 1/4" to smooth exposed rows of wire prongs. Bend screen into a tube which will fit inside can. Staple overlapped edges. Place tube in can. Fill can with grass. Catch bugs. Place second can over opening. Variation: Fill one tuna can with plaster of Paris. Insert plastic flowers into wet plaster. Place wire tube into plaster. Allow to dry. Other tuna can is the removable lid.
6. **Bottle Catcher:** Use clear plastic bottle which has a screw top lid. Perforate the lid for air. Add twigs so bug will have a place to climb.
7. **Milk Carton Catcher:** Cut windows in two opposite sides of a milk carton. Place carton in the foot of a nylon stocking. Place bug in carton. Secure top of stocking by tying knot or using twister seal.
8. Place on the science table a tray containing shallow dirt and about six earthworms, a magnifying glass, and a mirror. Encourage children to examine the earthworm closely. Do they have a front end and a tail? How can you tell? Do you see a head? Look in the mirror. You have a face. Does the earthworm have a face? Does he have eyes, ears, or nose? Listen for expression of concepts already covered. (The mouth will probably be mentioned too. Point out that our mouth is on our face, but the earthworm's mouth is hidden.)



Science

9. Place a worm at the bottom of a wet jar. Place a wet plastic straw in the jar along with the worm. Keep the jar in a dark room for a few hours. If you can't see the worm when you come back, look again. It may be inside the straw. How did the earthworm get inside the straw? Why do you think he is inside the straw? Can you think of any other animals that could get inside a soda straw?

Sweet Potato Plant—Put sweet potato in a glass jar, supported with tooth picks. Small end should be down. Discuss the fact that the potatoes are plants. The concept that plants need water to grow can also be brought in here. Later, when potato starts to grow, discuss the function of the roots. Point out the roots grow down and the stems grow up. Also discuss the fact that potatoes grow under ground.

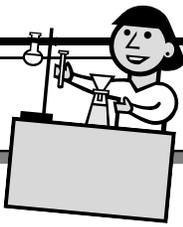
Plants are important to people.

1. We depend on plants for food.
2. We eat different parts of plants.
3. Many things we wear come from plants.
4. Plants give us many things everyday.

Seeds and plants need light to grow.

1. Plants store enough light in the daytime so they can live at night when it is dark.
2. The sunlight helps to make food for the plant.

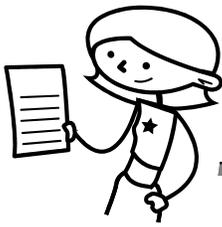




Science

Great Plant Activities for School-age:

1. **Carrot Top**—Cut off carrot top and put in water. (Use one that has already started to sprout) Let children peel carrots for juice time. This is an excellent opportunity to teach math concepts—Have teachers cut up carrot strips at the table with the children. Discuss the number of parts as the teacher cuts the carrot. Discuss the fact that we eat carrots and emphasize the fact that carrots are plants. Discuss the fact that carrots grow below ground.
2. **Plants Need Water and Light**—Pot 4 plants. One plant will sit in a sunny window and will be watered twice a week. One plant will sit in a sunny window and will not be watered. One plant will be placed under a container that will not be placed in light and will be watered twice a week. One plant will be placed under a container that will not let in light and will not be watered. Let children predict what will happen to each plant—write down their predictions. Observe for 2 to 4 weeks or until plants have wilted significantly. You may then want to let the children decide what they could do to help the plant grow—then try it.
3. **Plants Need Light**—Use a green plant and a large corrugated box. Make an opening in the box at about the height the leaves will reach when placed inside. Place the plant in the box with opening in the direct path of the sun (leaves will bend toward opening). After several days, turn the plant so leaves point away from light (Again, leaves will bend toward the light.)
4. **Seeds Need Water To Grow**—You need two containers the same size and dried lima beans. Fill each container 1/3 full of dried beans. Add water to the top of one container. In one day the beans in the container with water will soak up all of it and they will fill up all the space. Concepts—seeds soak up water. When they soak up water, they get bigger. A seed needs water so that it can break its outer covering. You need beans, water and candle wax. Put a tiny drop of wax on tiny hole where bean was attached to pod. Soak these beans. Compare to some which have not been waxed. You need lima beans, sand and two glass jars—Put lima beans between sand and glass jar. Keep the sand in one jar dry and in the other, moist. The bean in the jar that is moist will sprout.
5. **Seeds and Plants Need Air to Grow**—You need soaked beans and two containers with lids. Divide the beans into two containers, put lid on one but not the other. Which will sprout? Cover some plant leaves with Vaseline on both sides. When the leaf is covered it can't breathe so it doesn't get the air it needs to live.



Fine Motor

Manipulative Materials

1. Judy Farm Floor Puzzle
2. The Puzzle People—Vegetable puzzle, fruit puzzle, and food group puzzle
3. Rolf's Large Knobbed Fruits and Vegetables puzzle
4. Several manufactures sell plastic or wooden fruits and vegetables
5. Child craft Flower Pot Puzzle
6. Child craft Story Sequence Board—planting tulips and the apple tree in season
7. Magnifying glasses to examine plants and their parts
8. Judy See-quees—Seasons, Seed to Flower, Apple Tree Grows
9. Make matching games using pictures of flowers, fruits, and vegetables
10. Buy different kinds of seeds or dried beans. Let children sort in muffin tin using tweezers.
11. In the water table use sand or dirt and let the children pretend to plant a garden using seeds, tiny tools, row markers.
12. Puzzle People Flower Pot
13. Cut spring pictures out of magazines and mount on cardboard and cut into pieces





Gross Motor

Jump the River

Explain to the children that they are taking a walk in the woods and you may need to cross a stream or river. Ask children to walk throughout the space. When they come to a river (rope, hoop, or tape line on floor), they need to jump over without getting their feet wet. Be sure to have many rivers so that children can move through the "woods" without having to wait a turn. After 3 to 5 minutes of jumping, children may need a brief rest period (30 to 60 seconds) before continuing the activity. Ask children to take off on two feet and to swing their arms forward when they jump. When landing, children should land on two feet spreading their feet about shoulder width apart so they have a wide base of support when they land. Emphasis should be placed on landing on both feet at the same time without falling over. After landing children should proceed to and jump over the river. Give children plenty of time to move throughout the space and jump over all the rivers. For safety reasons, suggest that children not get closer than two giant steps for each other, especially when they are swinging their arms to take off and when landing.

Hot Hoops

You will need one colored hula hoop for each child. If you don't have hoops, you can use circles of colored yarn that are about 36" in diameter. Spread the hoops out in the activity area. Each child stands in a hoop. Choose one color to be the "hot hoop", saying, "Red hoops are hot!" Any child standing in a red hoop jumps out and joins another child in a different color hoop. Emphasize that children should jump off two feet when they jump out of the hoops. No more than four children should share a hoop at one time. When hoops are filled with children (4 per hoop) or everyone has found a hoop, children go back to their original hoops. Change the color of the hot hoop, call out a new color.



Gross Motor

Pop Bottle Bowling

Materials:

- ◆ Ten plastic liter pop bottles
- ◆ Sand
- ◆ Rubber ball

What To Do:

Put about one cup of sand in the pop bottles to stabilize them. Trace circles on the ground where the bottles should be placed. Let the children roll the ball to knock over the "pins."

Go on a garden walk. Look for things that are blooming.

Have the children march in a parade around the center while singing "Ants Go Marching On"





Cooking and Children Mix Well

1. **Gelatin Ladybugs:** Bring four cups of water to a boil. Add four envelopes unflavored gelatin and stir until dissolved. Then add three envelopes red flavored gelatin and stir until dissolved. Pour into small individual pans. Let each child count six raisins and place them in the gelatin for ladybug spots. Add licorice strings for antennae.
2. **Bugs on a Branch:** Fill celery stalk with cheese spread. Place raisins on cheese spread for bugs. Sprinkle with paprika for ants on a branch. Instead of raisins, use cranberries.
3. **Vegi-Caterpillar:** Skewer three or four cherry tomatoes on a sandwich toothpick. Poke two holes in last tomato. Poke small celery leaves into holes. Presto! A caterpillar. Variation: Use parsley instead of celery leaves.
4. **Butterfly:** Place carrot stick in center of lettuce leaf. Cut slice of pineapple in half. Add a seedless grape or raisin at top of carrot. Place raisins or grape halves on pineapple. Variation: Instead of pineapple, use pear cut lengthwise for wings.
5. **Ladybug:** Use half of tomato. Place flat side of tomato on lettuce leaf. Use whole, black, olives for spots.
6. **Chocolate Worms:** Melt 12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate morsels and 2 Tbsp. butter. Add crunchy chow mien noodles. Mix well and enjoy.
7. **Potato Clouds:** Have children prepare instant potatoes according to directions.
8. **Kite Sandwich:** Make favorite sandwich using square whole wheat bread. Form kite string by extending in a line from one corner with any of the following: pickles, carrot strips, and olives.
9. **Rainbow Bananas:** Use 1/2 to 1 banana per child. On a paper plate make small mounds of at least four different colors of jell-o powder. Child dips slices of banana into jell-o and eats.
10. Taste vegetables which are different parts of plants. They are especially good if you are able to grow your own or take children to the store or farm to purchase them.
May be served with dip.

Flowers—broccoli, cauliflower
Stems—celery, asparagus
Leaves—lettuce, spinach
Roots—radishes, beets, carrots
Tubers—potatoes
Seeds—corn, beans, peanuts
Pods—peas, beans





Cooking and Children Mix Well

1. Bake bread, biscuits or cornbread. What plants are we eating? Taste other grains—oatmeal, cereal, macaroni, noodles, cookies, crackers.
2. Taste different kinds of fruit. How do they grow? What about raisins?
3. **Vegetable Soup**—Let each child bring 1 vegetable to school and make a friendship vegetable soup to eat for lunch or snack. If you read the story Stone Soup you may want to add a stone!
4. Compare looks, taste, smell, texture of cooked and raw vegetables.
5. **Bean Sprouts**—Grow then serve on butter or cheese sandwich. Many seeds sprout with excellent results. The most popular are mung, soy, lentil, alfalfa and what. Seeds are available at supermarkets or health food stores. Buy seeds which have not been treated with chemicals. Items needed are seeds, water, and a quart jar with screw-top lid. Punch 8-12 holes in the tip of the jar lid with an ice pick. Holes need to be smaller than the seed.

Day 1: Place seeds in jar of warm water. Secure lid. Set in dark place. Soak overnight.

Day2: In morning and evening drain jar. Fill with tepid water. Swirl seeds and water. Drain. Set in dark place. To insure adequate drainage and ventilation, prop jar at an angle with lid facing down.

Day 3-7: Rinse morning and evening as indicated in Day 2. when sprouts are desired length, set jar in sunlight. Watch them turn green! Rinse hulls away by placing on jar lid with holes slightly larger than hulls. Hold the jar at a slight angle under running water. Swirl sprouts as the jar fills and overflows. Continue until most hulls are rinsed away. Now they are ready to eat!





Block Center

1. Provide flowers, real or artificial, to make bouquets in a variety of vases. Allow time to create flower arrangements and dramatic play as florist.
2. Inexpensive small plastic flowers could be used to lay out a park or garden by letting the children insert flowers into flat pieces of Styrofoam then hold them upright as if they were growing.

Encourage creativity by providing blocks/materials that children can take apart, fill and empty, sort and stack, assemble and build various constructions.

Provide the following items in your block center:

- ◆ Shelf's to display blocks and accessories
- ◆ Large lightweight wooden unit blocks sets
- ◆ Variety of blocks in different textures such as (plastic, foam, cardboard)
- ◆ Large snap-lock block sets
- ◆ Small vehicles, trains, tractors, truck sets, gas and water pump
- ◆ Animals (wild, tame, farm. Zoo) and people (all cultures)
- ◆ Block accessories (incline. Wheel)
- ◆ Cardboard, sacks, popsicles sticks, craft sticks.
- ◆ Signs (no parking. Service station, grocery store) traffic signs
- ◆ Block pictures, building structures with various architectural designs, bridges, etc.



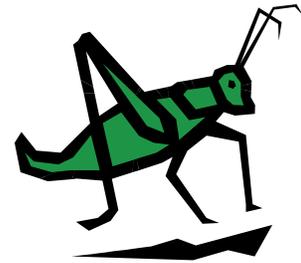


Dramatic Play



Creature Creep: Dramatize following verse:

Grasshoppers go jumpity jump, jumpity jump.
Caterpillars crawl humpity hump, humpity hump.
Playful crickets go hoppity hop, hoppity hop.
In the springtime happy children like you
Will jumpity, humpity, hoppity too.



Creature Movement:

1. **Worm Wiggle:** Lie on stomach. Hold arms at side. Try to move body forward without using hands or elbows.
2. **Grasshopper Leap:** Squat with fingers touching floor. Leap upward and forward. Return to squatting position. Continue to leap across room.
3. **Spider Walk:** From standing position bend so fingers are touching the floor. Lift one leg and arm very high in front of body and stretch. Take a long step. Repeat with opposite leg and arm.
4. **Caterpillar Creep:** Lie on floor in prone position with hands beside shoulders. Lift upper body by straightening arms. Bending knees forward. Stretch front of body forward. Lie flat. Repeat.
5. **Butterfly Flutter:** Move arms up and down as if flying. "Fly" around room.
6. **Flight of Bumblebee:** Move arms in figure-eight motion. Pretend to fly around room while making a buzzing sound.

Thunder and lightning: pretend to go for a walk. Say "There are large gray nimbostratus clouds in the sky. Drip. Drop. Drip. Drop. Rain begins to fall. Don't worry, I have my umbrella. I'll open it. Lightening flashes (clap hands) thunder roars (stamp feet). Don't worry, I'll put on my raincoat! Run quickly! (run feet) Run Faster! The house is just ahead. Open the door. Whew! Dry off. Change my clothes and sit down for a rest.

Floating clouds: Use white balls as clouds. Provide several balls for children. Make cloud float by tapping, batting it.

1. Keep ball afloat by battering back and forth between two children.
2. Make circle of children. First player bats ball up then calls out friend to come into center to keep afloat. Try to keep going until all have had a turn.

Rainy Day Walk: Use safe umbrella. Put line of tape on floor. Try to stay on line while holding umbrella. Walk backwards, walk forward, hop on one foot.



Sand and Water

Have A Clean Seat

Materials:

- ◆ Dirty hard plastic chairs
- ◆ Scrub brushes
- ◆ Liquid detergent
- ◆ Dish tubs or buckets
- ◆ Warm water
- ◆ Sponges
- ◆ A hose



What to do:

Let the children help bring all the chairs outside. Fill the tubs or buckets with warm water and detergent. Let the children use the sponges and scrub brushes to wash the chairs.

Sifting

Materials:

- ◆ Purchased sand sifters with varying sizes of holes and/or colanders, flour sifters, tea strainers, pieces of screen with different width of mesh, spoons with and without holes in them
- ◆ Container to fill
- ◆ Shovels or scoops
- ◆ Plates or pit tins
- ◆ Coarse, dry sand

First, just let the children experiment with the sifters, making their own discoveries. Then provide three or four different mesh sifters and three or four different containers. Have them start by pouring a pail of sand through the sifter with the largest holes into a second pail. Save what particles were left in the sifter on one plate. Then have them put the sifter with the next largest holes over the empty pail and pour the sand from the full pail through it. Again, save what was left in the sifter on a second plate. Do this procedure again with a third, finer sifter. Then have the children compare the particles that were left in each sifter. How are the particles different? Can the children tell you why?



Books Worth Reading

Benchmarks: 1.19 Works cooperatively with others on completing a task

WSS: Domain: Personal and Social Development Component: Interaction with Others Performance

Indicators: 1: Interacts easily with one or more children. 2: Participates in the group life of the class

Books	Author
Up Above and Down Below	Irma E. Weber
The Carrot Seed	Ruth Krauss
The Growing Story	Ruth Krauss
Johnny Maple Leaf	Alvin Tresselt
The Reason for a Flower	Heller
A Tree Is Nice	Janice Udry
How does a Plant Grow	Lowrey
The Plant Sitter	Gen Zion
What Shall I Put In Hole That I Dig?	Eleanor Thompson
Nature Wonderland	Golden Book Educational Services
Everybody Eats	Mary McBurney Green
All About Seeds	Susan Kuchalla
The Tiny Seed	Eric Carne
How A Seed Grows	Helene Jordan
Johnny Grows a Garden	Lenord Brooks
Dandelion	Ladislav Service
Your First Garden Book	Marc Brown
The Little Red Hen	Your Favorite
The Wonderful Tree House	Longman
Jack and the Beanstalk	Your Favorite
A Garden Is Good	Lillie Chaffin
A Tree Is A Plant	Clyde Bulla
Where Does Your Garden Grow?	Augusta Goldin
The Plant Sitter	Gene Zion
Seeds By Wind and Water	Helene Jordan
The Tall Grass Zoo	Winifred Lubbel
Busy Seeds	Irma Black
Seeds and More Seeds	Millicent Selsam
My Garden Grows	Aldren Watson
Hamilton Ducks Springtime Story	Getz





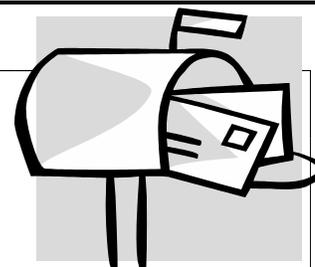
Special Section

ASU Childhood Services would like to give credit for some of the clip art used to:

Preschool Patterns

Early Learning Timesavers

By: Marilyn G. Barr



Suggestions? Ideas? Questions?

Feel free to send us your feedback!

Email: kmurphy@astate.edu

Mail: Childhood Services PO Box 808 State University, AR 72467

Registration Form

2009 Family Child Care Conference
Registration Form
May 8-9, 2009
Jonesboro, Arkansas

Name: _____ Registry or SS# _____

Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Place of Work: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

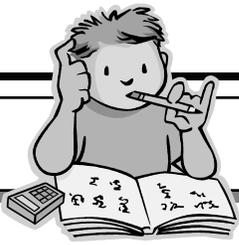
Email: _____ Fax #: _____

The cost of the two day conference on Friday, May 8 and Saturday, May 9, 2009, is \$25.00, which includes all sessions and lunch on Saturday.

Complete and return this registration form ASAP. Include check or money order for \$25.00 made payable to *ASU Childhood Services*. *The deadline to register is April 27, 2009.*

No refunds will be issued after April 27, 2009.

Return this form to ASU Childhood Services, PO Box 808, State University, AR 72467, Attention: FCC Conference.



Training Announcement

*39th Early Childhood Education Conference
Arkansas State University
August 10th-12th
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Contact 888-429-1585
Registry is coming soon!*



*For list of other training opportunities you can go to:
<http://professionalregistry.astate.edu>*