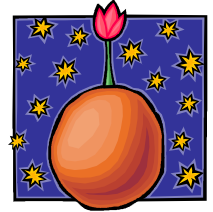




Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness

Mission: Every child in Pottstown will enter Kindergarten ready to learn and achieve



PEAK Classroom Connections

PEAK Classroom Connections: Creating a professional learning community for the early learning teachers in Pottstown to share ideas, improve instructional practices and implement researched-based best practices in the delivery of quality early learning experiences

Happy Teacher Appreciation Week

May 4th-8th

Thank you for making a difference



April 2009

The Starfish Story

Original Story by: Loren Eisley



One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean.

*Approaching the boy, he asked, "What are you doing?"
The youth replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean.
The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."*

"Son," the man said, "don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish?"

You can't make a difference!"

*After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish,
and threw it back into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said...*

"I made a difference for that one."

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Literacy Connections

Over in the Meadow by Ezra Jack Keats



BEES

Bumble Bee Dance: Tell children about bees and that they dance to communicate. Explain what *communicate* means and have the children dance to communicate...whatever they want! They could communicate feelings or directions. Keep a copy of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumblebee" on hand to share with students for a classical music connection.

BUGS

What attracts ants?: Bury (to the rim) several containers of food in the ground. Put a piece of cardboard on top of the container. Have children come up with the foods they want to try to see what attracts ants and what doesn't, what works best? Check back later in the day to see who was right.

Spider Legs: Insects get stuck in a spider's web because the web is sticky, but a spider doesn't get stuck in his own web because his legs are oily. Experiment with this idea by taping two squares of contact paper to the table, sticky side up. Pretend the hand is a bug, with fingers as the legs. Let the spider walk across the contact paper, then walk the fingers through cooking oil before walking across the sticky paper, what happens?

During your study of bugs make a jar shaped container poster and have children record as many kinds of bugs as they can think of. You can use pictures and word to illustrate your class poster.

FISH

Exploration: Buy a fresh fish to bring in for the children to explore. Talk about the parts of a fish (fins, scales, gills, etc). Leave the real fish in your science area for the children to observe and explore. Have them record their experiences.

Dramatic Play Pond: Make a pond in your dramatic play area. Put down a sheet of blue paper, or blue material. Children can make rocks around it by covering boxes with cut paper bags and then sponge painting black and brown on them. Or stuff paper bags with newspaper and sponge paint them. Or add real rocks. Have children brainstorm what else they should add to their pond: fishing poles, picnic baskets, buckets, tackle boxes, fishing vests, hats, etc.

FROGS

Water Table: Add lily pads cut from craft foam to the water table. Add small counting frogs or other plastic frogs to the table. The foam floats so you can put the frogs on top. You can write numbers on the lily pads so children can match the appropriate number of frogs to the right lily pad. You can also search the floral department at craft stores for plastic lily pads, cattails, etc. Or find some real ones to bring in.

Parents as Partners

Support in Times of Need. Consider families in your programs and the multiple stressors they may be up against - illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, single parenthood, unemployment, depression - could be a few. Did you know that poverty has consistently been shown to be the factor most strongly correlated with child abuse and neglect? These parents often have high degrees of stress, yet low levels of resources that could help them cope effectively with it. Research suggests that helping these families access material resources and behavioral health services represent two promising intervention strategies. The good news is that as teachers, you are in an especially good position to provide these interventions - through everyday interactions with your families, you may be able to detect the development of a crisis and connect parents with resources when they are needed most.

(Adapted from Strengthening Families through Early Care & Education - Center for the Study of Social Policy)

OOEY GOOEY IDEAS



RAINBOW LAYERS: In a clear plastic cup pour a layer of each of the following liquids: colored green water, blue dish soap, cooking oil and some pink shampoo. Watch as the layers separate out into the same pattern no matter which order you poured them into the cup!

CLEAN MUD: Grate 3 Bars of Ivory Soap. In a bowl mix the grated soap, 1 roll of toilet paper and some warm water. Keep mixing until it forms the consistency of mashed potatoes! You can store it in airtight container and reconstitute it with more water. Dispose of Clean Mud in the trashcan not the drain!

CHOCOLATE PLAYDOUGH: 2 cups water, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt, 2 tsp cream of tartar, 2 TBS oil, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cocoa, 2 cups flour. Then mix it all together and then cook it in a pot over low heat. Remove it from the heat and knead until smooth.

LEMON POPPY SEED PLAYDOUGH: 1 package lemon poppy seed muffin mix, 2 cups flour, $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

STRAWBERRY CAKE PLAYDOUGH: 1 package strawberry cake mix, 2 cups flour, $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

(From www.ooneygoeey.com & Lisa Murphy)

Health Benefits of Regular Physical Activity

- Reduces the risk of developing heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure and diabetes
- Relieves stress
- Helps increase self-esteem
- Helps to regulate body weight
- Helps you sleep better
- Helps build healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Improves the mobility of older adults
- Gives an overall feeling of well-being

Advice for Today

- Engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily
- Become physically active if you are inactive
- Maintain or increase physical activity if you are already active
- Stay active throughout your life
- Choose physical activities that fit in with your daily routine

Provided by Kathy Perry, PEAK Health Consultant
"Color You Healthy"

