



You Are An Essential Part Of The Team!!

Our Community

Our theme for the month of December is, Our Community. The topics are: Places around Town, Transportation and Community Helpers. Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa are also celebrated this month.

December is a good time to teach children about other cultures. Children can see how others, live, travel and celebrated holidays.



Story Time

Corduroy's Christmas Surprise
By: Don Freeman

Hanukkah Haiku By: Harriet Ziefert

K is for Kwanzaa: A Kwanzaa Alphabet Book
By: Juwanda G. Ford

Community Helpers from A to Z?
By: Bobbie Kalman

What is a Community from A to Z?
By: Bobbie Kalman

Cool Cars and Trucks By: Sean Kenney

The Best Book of Trains
By: Richard Balkwill

Seaborn By: Craig Moodie

Dates to remember:

- Dec. 8th Ornaments with Dad
- Dec. 18th Home Visits End
Early Release 12 pm
- Dec. 21st-31st Winter Break (No School)
- Jan. 1st New Year Holiday
- Jan. 4th Staff Development
- Jan. 5th Children Return

Mid Winter Program will be done at Parent Meetings.

Creative Curriculum Checkpoint Dates for Winter Session 10/30/2009-02/14/2010

OUR THEME FOR JANUARY WILL BE INSIDE & OUTSIDE ME/SEASON. IF YOU HAVE ANY ACTIVITIES, FINGERPLAYS OR BOOKS TO SHARE PLEASE SEND THEM. SHARING IS FUN!!

Environmental Print: This is a wonderful way to help children with Print Awareness. Take items such as panels from cereal/cracker boxes, labels from canned foods, signs/bags from restaurants and stores, advertisements. Use these items to make cards or signs, post them on the wall, back of a shelf or laminate and place in centers.

By using environmental print you are exposing the child to letter, words and sounds. This activity enables the children to identify the words and letters because it is often things that they see on a daily basis. Provide paper and pencil so that the children may practice printing and copying the letters and words.

A Broken-Down Car (responding to a book through art): To begin, read aloud *Rattletrap Car* by Phyllis Root. Junie, Jakie, Poppa and the baby want to go to the lake, but will their rattletrap car make it? Not without a variety of props and the sticky properties of chocolate marshmallow fudge delight! After the read-aloud, give each child an enlarged copy of the car pattern attached. Provide a variety of craft materials and a container of brown paint mixed with white glue (chocolate marshmallow fudge delight). Children use the paintbrush to apply the sticky dessert to their car. They children place a variety of colorful items in the mixture. The children have created a chocolate marshmallow fudge delight just like the one in the book!! (Brooke Beverly, Dudley, MA)

Vroom, Vroom, Vroom! A fun circle-time activity for color identification. Enlarge the car pattern (attached) and make several colorful copies and laminate them. Place the cars on a board or the wall at circle time. Help the children identify the colors of the cars. Then prompt the children to cover their eyes and say, "Vroom, vroom, vroom!" Remove a car and have the children uncover their eyes. Help the children identify the color of the car that "drove away".



Baker/Bakery: Children always seem to enjoy cooking/baking. This activity can either be placed in the dramatic play or sensory area. Provide the children with various colors of playdough, plastic plates, bowls, knives, rolling pins and cookie cutters. You can also provide each child with an apron and a baker's hat. You can make baker hats by using white cardboard strips and white tissue paper. Provide the children with menus along with pencil and paper. Then allow the children to open up their bakery and have lots and lots of fun.

Blocks

Our Town: Take photos of various buildings, structures, or landmarks in your town. For example: hospital, grocery store, bank, post office, police station, statues, parks, fountains, etc. Using clear contact paper, attach the photos to wooden building blocks. Put the blocks in the Block Area so children can use them to make a town. Encourage them to construct roads and drive cars around the buildings. (Shirley Salach, Northwood, NH)

Outdoor Play

Safety Town: Extend the town play to the outdoor play area. Provide road/traffic signs for the children riding bikes in the bike area. You can make stop signs along with traffics lights. Encourage the children to have fun driving around the town. As an extension you can also use large boxes to create buildings to place around the town. The children will have a lot of fun with this activity and it will give them a chance to explore the theme of town outdoors. (Cindy Winther, Oxford, MI)

Circle Time

Destinations: Cut out pictures of cars from magazines or newspapers. Glue pictures onto index cards and laminate them. Place the cards in a shoebox. At Circle Time ask each child to draw a card. Take turn asking each child, "Where are you going in your car?" Child will then holds up the card and tell class where they are going in their "car". Most children will describe familiar locations, but encourage them to dream up fantasy places as well. As an extension you can make cards with other forms of transportation such as: bus, train, truck, horse, etc. Continue the game as before. (Dotti Enderle, Richmond TX)

Science

Listen to Heartbeats: Obtain a real stethoscope and place it on the science table. While children rotate during center time, help them find their own and each other's heartbeats. Encourage the children to count how many time their heart beats in a set amount of time. So that children understand how to use the stethoscope it would probably be best to introduce the activity during circle time, then place in the science center for the children's use. (Terrific Themes for Year-Round Fun)

KWANZAA

Kwanzaa Fruit (Appreciating similarities and differences among people): Families who celebrate Kwanzaa often display a basket of fruit among other Kwanzaa symbols. Present a basket of fruit. Explain that the fruit reminds people of the importance of hard work. Growing fruit is hard work, but the tasty fruit is a reward at the end. Have students explore and identify the fruit. Then give each child a snack of mixed fruit to celebrate hard work! (Deborah, Garmon, Groton, CT)

Hanukkah

Menorahs: You will need paper, scissors, glue and paint. Trace the children hands on yellow paper, have them cut them out then glue them on blue construction paper so that the shapes of the pinkies overlap. Cut nine white paper flames and have children glue them to the top of the finger shapes. Then mix a bit of red paint and glitter or mix glue and red glitter and let children paint the paper flames so that they burn brightly. (preschooleducation.com)



Cookies for Santa (Sequencing events): in advance color and cut a copy of the sequencing cards attached, laminate them and make them ready for flannel board use. As you lead youngsters in singing each verse of the song below, attach the corresponding card to you flannelboard and prompt y youngsters to pantomime the action. After the song, scramble the cards and then have children reorder them. (Roxanne Dearman, Carlote, NC)

(Sung to the tune: "Peanut Butter and Jelly")

(First you take the batter and you stir it, you stir it

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Cookies, Christmas Cookies, for Santa!

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Continue with the following:

Then you take the dough and you roll it, you roll it

Then you take the cutters and you press them, you press them.

Then you take the shapes and you bake them, you bake them.

Then you take some frosting and you spread it, you spread it.

Then you take some sprinkles and you shake them, you shake them.

Early Head Start

Glitter for Toddlers: This glitter is perfect to use with young toddlers and preschoolers. To make a batch of glitter, mix food coloring and salt; then spread the mixture out on a paper to dry. When the glitter is dry store it in a lidded container. Make as many colors and you would like, and let the toddlers have lots of glitter, art fun. (Gayle Brown, Wyckoff, NJ)

Spicy Reindeer (Sensory): Using the attached pattern cut out a reindeer from sandpaper for each child. Have the child rub his/her fingers over the sandpaper, feeling the texture. Provide a mixture of spices such as ginger, ground cloves, and ground cinnamon. Then assist the child in brushing glue over the sandpaper and sprinkling the spices over the glue. If making for younger children teacher can make these ahead of time and then allow the toddlers to feel the texture and smell the spices. (Doreen James, Pfafftown, NC)



Jingle Bell Dance: Make wrist bells for each child by stringing on to three bells on a pipe cleaner or ribbon. Twist the pipe cleaners or tie the ribbon around the child's wrist. If desired, you may put bells on the children's ankles also. Be sure to supervise the activity at all times when using small bells. Play music and let the children shake their arms and legs to do a jingle bell dance. For a variation you can also do a Bell Hunt. Hide a variety of larger bells in your classroom. Encourage children to find the bells. As soon as a child finds a bell, he/she should ring it and bring it to you. Continue the hunt until all the bells are found. (Toddler Games)

Traffic Jam Books (making toys for Infants/Toddlers): Cut out pictures of cars, trucks, and trains. Cut poster board to fit into plastic Ziploc bags. Glue the pictures to the poster board and label each vehicle using lowercase print. Place each picture into its own Ziploc bag. Punch holes in both the left and right side of the bag, and then thread short lengths of yarn through the holes. Tie the yarn to create an end-to-end traffic jam book. You can use different sizes of plastic bags to create small and large books. Talk about the vehicles as you look at the book with the children.

Bus, Plane, Train, and Ship: These books by, Chris L. Demarest, have concepts that have been carefully developed using action words and phrases that toddlers will enjoy. Use your best voice to make the sounds included in the telling of each story. Toddlers will also enjoy making the sounds with you. (Story stretchers for toddlers)

The **Bus** story is about a bus ride through the city. Take an imaginary ride through town with our toddlers. Use the language from the book as you journey on the bus. Talk about your adventures as you are traveling. Also remember that children always enjoy the song, "The Wheels on the Bus".

The story **Plane** provides for a great outdoor activity. Outdoors show the toddler how to stretch their arms out as wide as possible and then run fast like an airplane, holding their arms straight and stiff. Pretending to be an airplane is lots of fun for toddlers. Be sure to check the area and be sure that it is safe for running.

The story **Train** can be followed by a homemade shoebox train. Draw windows and wheels and any other parts on the boxes to make train cars. Punch a hole in the ends of each box and attach the boxes with string. Leave enough string so toddlers can pull the shoebox train.