From Tracy…

A bear listening game I play with my 3 & 4 year olds is called 'Bears Like Honey' and it goes like this... We all sit in a circle. One child is chosen to be a bear and sits in the center with a musical instrument e.g. sleigh bells (imaginary honey pot). All the children chant "Isn't it funny how bears like honey, buzz, buzz, buzz. I wonder why he does. Go to sleep Mr. bear, don't peep Mr. Bear." (At this point the child in the center pretends to sleep and a child from the circle pinches the honey pot/bells - and shakes them loudly and hides them behind their back, everyone hides their hands. We all shout "Wake up Mr. Bear, someone has stolen your honey!" the child in the center then has to try and remember where they heard the sound coming from when the bells were shook. They say the name of a child they think has got it, that child either shows their empty hands or the instrument. When the culprit is found then it is their turn to be the bear in the circle. A really good test of listening skills!

--//--

From Anita…

Here is an idea for Teddy Bears!

Paper Bag Panda: Children glue black facial features and paws on a white paper bag to make a panda puppet.
Bears I Know and Love: children color a small bear shaped booklet of 3 famous bears and draw their own teddy bear on the last page.
Bear Head Bands: Children may make a head hand using markers, stickers, glitter to decorate and wear for a beary good feeling.
Create your own bear: Cut out a bear of their choice, decorate using a variety of materials, yarn, material, or brush with white glue and dip in cinnamon and sugar for great smelling bears.

--//--

From Karen…

Indoor volleyball is a great game for fun and exercise. You will need yarn, balloons and groups of four children. The yarn serves as the volleyball net. Cut a six to eight foot length of yarn. Two children are needed to stretch out the yarn across the room; each child holding end taut, chest high. Tie inflated balloon with yarn cut 2-3 foot length. Tie
end of yarn near the middle of volleyball net yarn. Balloon is now hanging from net yarn for two other children to bat or volley back and forth using a three minute timer. When time is done switch end holders and players. Doesn't matter if balloon is hit over or under the net yarn...balloons stay in the playing area! Have fun!

--//--

From Roxanne…

Just wanted to share a fun way to learn and practice shapes, numbers, letters and colors all at the same time! My students love this game and have asked to do it over and over. We call it the "Musical Mystery Picture" game.

In my class we took 3 very long sheets of white butcher paper (any color will do) and glued a lot of thin foam upper and lower case letters, numbers and shapes randomly all over the sheets of paper then we taped those sheets down on to the top of three long tables.

Next, we took three long sheets of light green butcher (we used colored paper this time so that the children cannot see through the paper) and placed them down over the top of the letter/number/shape papers and then taped them down well enough so that the children will not be able to lift up the paper to peek under to see where the "bumps" are. (yes we did have "peeping Tom's" !)

Next, since I have 18 students, we divided the children into 3 teams with 6 on each team, each child on each team, has a different color of crayon so they could tell which bumps they had colored.

Rules:

#1 When the music plays, you will march around your table. Please do not touch the table or feel for bumps when you are marching.. No cheating!!!

#2 When the music stops, everyone must stop where they are. You may use your hand now to feel for bumps to color or you may do a crayon rubbing over the bumps to see what is there. Please stay in your personnel space! Your friends will be sad if you color all of your bumps and theirs too! Please do not lift up the paper to look under it and see where the bumps are. Again, no cheating! We give them either 30 seconds to 1 minute to color each time we stop the music. The more times they play this game, the less time they get to color! Makes it challenging.

#3 We will continue to start and stop the music until all of the "Mystery Bumps" have been colored on each table.
We randomly asked them what they have found and cheer them on. Plus they enjoyed yelling out the shapes, numbers and letters they had found on their mystery paper. Each time I stopped the music they stopped to color a "bump".

When we are finished covering the paper with color and revealing the "Mystery Picture", they sit down in their chairs around their tables and talk about what letters/shapes/numbers that they have found at their table. (They will know which "bumps" are theirs because they each had their own color of crayon.)

**Review:**
We ask them questions about their mystery picture. I see you found a letter, what is it? is it upper case or lower case, what sound does it make, give me a word that begins with that sound. You found an "a" is it a vowel or a consonant? Think of a word that begins with that letter.

What number did you find? I see you found a "4" hop that many times, or I see you found a shape, what is it? Is there any of those in our room?

**Need more of a Challenge?** Later on, as the children get good at this game we have them switch tables each time the music stops! Now this is fun! They are scrambling to get to a different table to color a bump.

**Tips:**
For your letters, numbers and shapes, you can either cut them out with an Ellison machine. Some scrap booking, craft or teacher stores have these and will let you use them for free if you bring your own paper or buy theirs.. if you do this use very heavy card stock.

You can buy the large buckets of 1000 plus thin foam 1" to 2 " size of shapes, letter and numbers from craft stores or Walmart.

You can also use pre-cut 1" and 2" bulletin board letters and numbers as well.

We liked the foam ones in the buckets as they could be felt through the paper and were easier to do crayon rubbings over. Plus there were extra letters, shapes and numbers left over for other games later down the road. (We put them inside of plastic eggs and hid them around the room for an Ester egg hunt. The kids loved it!)

You can roll up your paper with letter/shapes/numbers attached to it and use it over and over again. We did!

Hope you like this idea!

--//--
From Heidi…

I run my own playgroup it is called Cubby House & is aimed especially at early childhood education stimulated by play & fun.

At the moment we are getting ready to celebrate Mothers day making gifts for mums & grandmothers. This year the gift is a painting to frame. Called growing with mummy's love paint a pot with leaves coming out of it a flower for each child. The flower is painted by the child's hand or footprint. Each child is represented by a handprint with their name painted underneath their flower & the year they were born, it makes a fun craft & a timeless beautiful keepsake.

--//--

From Ann…

Here's one for your archives:

At night, or whenever we need to get a child to calm down and focus a bit, we play "Which is Better?" I usually do this one with my son to help him calm down enough to go to sleep. Once I get him into bed and lights out, I'll ask questions like "Which are better, dinosaurs or lizards?" "cheerios or rice krispies", "puppies or kittens?" "puzzles or games?" "crayons or markers?" "bed or sleeping bag?" "playground or swimming pool?" "beach or camping?" etc. The possibilities are endless, and it REALLY works as a calming tool. My 3-year-old could still be going strong at midnight, and this gets him to sleep every time. He wants to play it in the car, but I usually tell him we have to save this game for bedtime!

--//--

From Claire…

Here is an idea for an activity which is my personal favorite ...I hope you enjoy it

Super Silk
Super silk is a real kid pleaser, some teachers may object to the mess but as you will know the messier the better. Super silk is a great activity for those shy talkers; they won't be able to keep in their excitement when they feel the experience of super silk. Through the excitement of playing with super silk I have had even the quietest of children be very vocal at this activity...
What You Need:
- corn flour
- water
- food coloring of choice
- a water/sand trough

Add the corn flour to water which you've dropped the food dye into. Slowly in till you get the right mixture and it's that simple...you will have a gloop that looks hard, but when picked up with hands melts like liquid then returns to a hard gloop again. This is a great activity and enjoyed by all ages even the teachers themselves...children and workers alike will be amazed and impressed at this fun talkative activity which extends either to conversations about texture or feelings and emotions...even science for older children.

--//--

From Amanda...

I have one that's brill and works very well.
Theme = Jungle Animals. Knowledge and understanding of the world.

Turn your library/book corner into a jungle animal habitat pick one animal per week. Draw or print out a set of foot/paw prints and place them on the floor. Each set of prints should lead to a visual clue. Works best with 3-4 clues. The last set of prints should lead to the habitat and before the big unveil you should discuss with the children which animal they think it is based on the clues they have found.

Examples are 1. Animal = Lion. Paw prints discuss is this a large animal or small animal?

Clue 1 = Relates to the country where the animal lives. So could be a map with a paw print on the country and a footprint or magnifying glass on Britain. Clue 2 = Relates to what the lion eats could be an antelope hidden in some green shredded paper tombola style. Clue 3 = relates to the animal appearance so this could be a lion’s mane or tail for the children to wear for the remainder of their search. Then on to the Lion's den. Discuss with the children the clues they have found and get ideas from the children as to which animal it could be. End the session with a story about a Lion as this will reinforce their knowledge. Afterwards the children should be able to tell you what a lion looks like where they come from and what they eat. This is a fab activity which the children never seem to tire of. Takes a fair bit of prep but can be used as part of your curriculum plans for years to come. Great cross curricular activity encourages the children to use their fine manipulative skill, gross motor skills, develop concentration, develop recall, increase knowledge and understanding of the world, co-operate with friends and you can even incorporate it into your global citizenship planning with endangered species and climate change etc.

--//--
From Ariel…

I started using shaving cream last month mixed with food dye for writing practice - and tried it on my large white board in my office.

I realized that it cleans the board beautifully, and...leaves a very pleasant odor.
I now use it myself to clean the board. I use the MR. CLEAN pads.

--//--

From Geraldine…

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Explain to the children that they are going to count in order but, instead of saying the number out loud, each child should choose an animal sound and make the appropriate number of noises to represent that number name. For example, the first child barks once the second child miaows twice, the third child grunts three times and so on, up to five. The sixth child chooses a new animal sound to re-start the counting process, beginning at one again. Suggest they use their fingers to count out the sounds.

Another one can combine art and counting. Have the children colour a fish picture each picture has a number on it from 1 to 10.

Laminate their pictures.

Then get all the plastic food from the home corner (you will need 55 pieces!).

Spread their fish pictures along the floor, space is needed for this one. Then ask one of the children how many pieces of food will you give the fish with number 1 on it? Allow the child to put one piece of food on that fish.

The ask another child how many pieces of food for number 2 and have the child count out 2 piece and lay it on fish number 2, and so on to fish number 10

--//--

From Debs…

Here is an activity the children really enjoyed......... can be used in or outdoors
During the morning session at the kindergarten the children were encouraged to put plastic insects and bugs into tupperware boxes, they filled them with water and put them into the freezer. When they were frozen we put them in the water tray with childrens tools (plastic hammers, screwdrivers)water cans, etc. There was a good level of interest, conversation and turn taking. The children enjoyed this activity and had lots of fun finding the bugs.
From Olivia…

The children do love shaving cream and the activity goes on, and on. I have also added tempera paint to experiment with color mixing, sand for texture or even dried used coffee grounds.
I have used the shaving cream activity also when teaching the children how to write their names.

--//--

From Anita…

Here is one that we like to cook with the kids and use to make great sand castles and sculptures.

Need:  2 Cups fine sand, 1 cup cornstarch, 1 ½ cups cold water.

Mix in an old pan. Stir 5-10 minutes over medium heat until thick. Let cool and knead for a bit. Store in a plastic bag or container until ready to use. This should yield enough for 6 children. Give children a paper plate and an assortment of small shells, stones, beads, straws, anything to decorate their creations. These will dry hard if left to set for a few days.

We call it a piece of Island when the children add shells and small tree branches.

--//--

From Mary…

I've actually done this dinosaur idea with margarine tubs filled with plaster of Paris and little dinosaurs or I've done sea creatures also and they dig them out with a plastic knife. Also, I've done blue jello with candy fish in it for snack. A good dinosaur snack is little dinosaur crackers buried in dirt, chocolate pudding.

--//--

From Christina…

Our center is located directly across the street from Long Island sound and when that winter wind begins to blow, BRRRRRRR! Our toddlers and young 3's love it when we take out the "Jumping Rugs". These fairly large (approx 2 x 5ft) rugs are of a curvey/groovy design that are brightly colored with large polka dots. I picked them up at IKEA for less than $5 per rug. Each child gets a Jumping Rug, the CD player goes on with their favorite music (usually anything by Laurie Berkner) and away they go! After some time of jumping on the polka dots they are ready for anything.

--//--
From Anita…

Here is another way of going on a Dinosaur Hunt, we hide little plastic dinos outside in our play area, where there is grass and gravel. Then the children take out whatever they think they need to find a dino. (shovels, brushes, magnifying glasses, buckets). They really have fun with this activity.

Science: Clay Dough or Plaster of Pairs Fossils
Many fossils were created by an animal or vegetation making an imprint on damp soil. This soil then hardened over time. Using a clay type dough children press objects (use shells & rocks) firmly into the dough on a small paper plate. Or we fill fossil molds with a bit of damp sand, and then press clay into the mold. Carefully press out the fossil for our class displays.

--//--

From Michele…

I have two groups at the day care where I teach. For the pre-K kids when I push them on the swings, I can push two kids when I stand in the middle, we do our ABC’s with each push, Mary shouts out ‘a’ John, ‘b’. etc. With the younger group of 4 year olds, I do the same thing only counting to 10 with each push. The kids love it. I all so have them count down from 10 - it really enforces the numbers for them.

--//--

From Vanessa…

On rainy days we like to play indoor tennis using balloons and plastic fly swatters, remembering to move the furniture. A great activity for gross motor and hand eye coordination.

--//--

From Sandi…

You have some really great ideas! We've been ALL ABOUT the Leprechauns this week! That tricky little guy put some strange white powder in all the kids' cups yesterday. When we added milk and they stirred, it turned into green pistachio pudding! Big hit!
Then, this morning, strange little green footprints were on our floor! Then we noticed our classroom rocking chair was missing! He left us a clue...a leprechaun book. The kids were going crazy trying to find the leprechaun and our chair!

--//--
From Cindy…

1 paper plate cut in half. Staple the side you eat on together. Take gift wrap tissue, cut into ½ in strips about 9 inches long. Glue one end to the inside of your plate and then you have jellyfish.

--//--

From Ivka…

These are some of my ideas:

Marble Painting: put paper in a container, then half a teaspoon of paint (kids choice) and 1 marble, then gently move container in different directions. if you put 2-3 colours you can get a very nice pattern.

Painting while listening music (Tchaikovsky's flower dance).

Paint what you see through a window.

Colour templates and cut them, then stick on paddle pop stick and use for puppet show.

To make a blossom tree use soft coloured paper and scrunch it, then draw tree bark patterns on it. alternatively, use white tissue paper and spray with edico colour.

Paperbark pictures: gather bark from trees to make a collage.

Make a placemat: on a piece of cardboard stick a child's photo and let him/her cut things from old magazines and then stick them on the cardboard. You can laminate the cardboard and children can use them for lunch time.

--//--

From Katrina…

Here is my idea that my kids loved during space theme week.

Astronuat food:

Split a package of instant pudding into about four servings. Put each serving into a Zip Loc Bag. Add the amount of milk that the package says to add. Next have your children squeeze and shake the bag until it starts to thicken. You can either eat it now or put it in the fridge through naptime. When your children eat it cut off one of the corners and
have them suck it through the corner.

Lots of fun and not very messy!!

--//--

**From Luanne…**

I have a couple of things I would like to share. Some of these are my ideas and some I have learned through my staff.

#1 At the sensory table instead of the usual water or sand, Have paper and scissors and let the children practice cutting. They love making confetti!!!! Great fine motor.

#2 Music - Billy Dean has a song out called "Let Them Be Little". Beautiful song that I will have the children sing and also teach them sign language.

#3 - Laminate your letters and numbers and have children roll playdoh into the shape. Wipe of when done. My children love this!!! I am not sure where this idea came from.

--//--

**From Patti…**

I got this from another provider in my area and it has remained one of children's favorite science experiments. I did this with a unit on Winter and the kids really think it is neat. It makes it even more fun for them because we do a lot of brainstorming and forcasting about what will happen with every theme we do.

**What You Need:**
- string/yarn
- wide mouth jar (pint)
- white pipe cleaners
- borax (see tips)
- pencil
- boiling water
- food coloring (opt.)
- scissors

Cut a pipe cleaner into three equal sections. Twist the sections together at their centers to form a six-sided snowflake shape. Don't worry if an end isn't even, just trim to get the desired shape (we have also taken a wrapped yarn around the pipe cleaner to make a different design). The snowflake should fit inside the jar (works in a clear glass bowl as well).

Tie the string to the end of one of the snowflake arms. Tie the other end of the string to the pencil. You want the length to be such that the pencil hangs the snowflake into the jar.

Fill the widemouth pint jar with boiling water.
Add borax one tablespoon at a time to the boiling water, stirring to dissolve after each addition. The amount used is 3 tablespoons borax per cup of water. It is okay if some undissolved borax settles to the bottom of the jar.
If desired, you may tint the mixture with food color.
Hang the pipe cleaner snowflake into the jar so that the pencil rests on top of the jar and the snowflake is completely covered with liquid and hangs freely (not touching the bottom of the jar).
Allow the jar to sit in an undisturbed location overnight.
Look at the pretty crystals!!! You can hang your snowflake as a decoration or in a window to catch the sunlight

Tips:
Because boiling water is used and because borax isn't intended for eating, adult supervision is recommended for this project.
If you can't find borax, you can use sugar or salt (it takes longer to grow the crystals, so be patient). Add sugar or salt to the boiling water until it stops dissolving. Ideally you want no crystals at the bottom of the bowl.

Another thing that I do is I have textured letters (cut out of cardboard, bubblewrap, sandpaper, denim, velvet, etc...) on the wall outside the bathroom. While the children are lined up waiting to use the restroom, they are encouraged to trace the letter they are standing by and name it.

--//--

From Cathy…

Here is my contribution. My activity is called "Alphabet Soup" and it's a fun way to introduce children to the letters of the alphabet. I purchased inexpensive magnetic letters (the ones we all have on our fridges) and place them into a plastic pot with enough water to allow the letters to float. Each child takes a turn stirring the letters with a spoon while everyone is chanting; Alphabet Soup Alphabet Soup
These are the letters
In my Alphabet soup
Each child then has a turn scooping up a letter and tries to identify it. The activity continues with thinking of words that begin with the letter and the sound it makes.

--//--

From Sharon…

I love coming up with different ways for kids to experience art. This year for Father's Day cards, the kids did painting with marbles.
What you need:
3 bright large marbles
3 small plastic ziplock bowls
3 different colors of tempera paint
1 shoebox lid with paper cut so it will lay flat inside the lid

In the classroom we usually have paint at the easel, so we use the brush from each paint container to brush the paint into each small bowl. Then put a marble into each bowl of paint. The children roll the marble in the paint (in one of the small bowls), and then roll it onto the paper in the shoebox lid. They roll the marble on the paper, and do this with all three colors. Brushing more paint in the bowls when needed. I emphasized the rolling the marble from the bowl of paint to the paper and from the paper to the bowls and the mess was kept at a minimum. The kids had fun and the pictures come out really kool.

--//--

From Kathleen…

One of my favorite (and the kids too!!) art projects is to use watered down glue to "paint" on a piece of waxed paper, then put several colors of tissue paper squares to make a collage. Finish with a layer of the glue mixture for a smooth effect. Then, cut out 2 identical shapes such as an apple, pumpkin, Christmas tree, etc. Glue the edges of the waxed paper between the 2 shapes, trimming if necessary. These look just like stained glass hanging in a window or hung from the ceiling.

--//--

From Debra…

Our pre-school children made a huge rainbow the other day.
We cut a large arch shape from heavy cardboard for the children and cut up squares of coloured tissue paper.
The children used brushes and PVA glue.
They scrunched up the squares of tissue paper and stuck them on the cardboard.
We used one colour at a time to complete the rainbow.
Another variation on this is to save the coloured foil from Easter eggs and cut it into squares to glue and make the rainbow.

Sticking with the weather idea we also made clouds from grey paint, cardboard and bubble wrap.
The children paint on the bubbly side of the bubble wrap and then turn it over and place it on the cardbord to make a print. It makes a lovely cloud effect. For added effect add glitter to the paint.

Another way to make cloud pictures is to have a watery solution of paint and add some detergent to it. This needs to be placed into a wide bowl or container.
Give the child a straw and have them blow bubbles into the paint.
These rise up over the container and a piece of paper is placed over them to make a print.

Thanks for your website and ideas - we are using these in Melbourne, Australia.

--//--

From Diane…

After 10 years of owning my own daycare/preschool and struggling with ideas for our summer camp program, I finally have experienced some success.

We came up with a Princess Tea Camp, a Super Heroes Camp, Build-A-Sock, and Future Scientists.

During the school year, I asked for donations of princess and superheroes costumes. I also purchased some myself and made some of them. I brought all of our kitchen sets into one classroom; set the tables for a tea party and purchased and borrowed Princess story books. The children dressed up at the beginning of class time, then gathered around the carpet for a Princess story. The story was then reenacted with the teacher as a facilitator. The camps were for 2 hrs. during the mornings. Super Heroes was similar, tying in literature with the dramatic play. Build-A-Sock camp started with the children gathering for a fairy tale or fable. The story was told by a story teller, the teacher, a story candle and puppets made out of socks. The children listened intently and then made one sock puppet choosing from the characters in the story. After they all made a puppet, we went and sat around the story candle and retold the story several times with their puppets. Future Scientists learned how to ask questions, observe and experiment and test for answers. The daycare children who are with us all summer are excited about the many choices we have for them.

--//--

From JoAnn…

I'm glad you have the opportunity to get all of us together and pool our ideas together. I have one that is great for exploring the senses. I collect camera film containers (any film development store gives them away free), in each container I place a cotton ball and put a few drops of vanilla, cherry, orange an so on. I then put a few small holes into the cap and each child smells and guesses what they smell. I graph how many correct responses that are given. After the project is complete I put masking tape over the caps and bring it out again later during review.

--//--
From Karen…

A couple of months ago we made 'Sunflowers' to go with our 'Spring' theme. We did the normal; used a paper plate for the center, cut out yellow paper for the petals and green for the stalks........then we printed out a photo of each of the children, cut them to fit in the center of the flower.

At 'circle time' we asked the children to say 'nice' things about each child. We had various things such as; 'she has a nice smile', 'he is my best friend' to 'I like her hair' and 'he likes playing with the animals.'

We wrote the quotations on the petals, then made a display of all the 'Sunflowers' in the entrance of our setting so that parents and visitors had a nice sunny welcome.

Everyone loved the display, we also had an inspection while the display was in place, the OFSTED inspector was most impressed, she said that it built on the children's sense of belonging, aided their self worth, and encouraged friendships, she praised us very highly.

I hope you have as much fun as we did doing this activity....we took a week to complete the display as we had 19 children and 3 adults to cater for :-)

--//--

From Sue…

Kids love to find a hidden treasure in the sandbox and bury them for each other to find. It might be a small sandbox toy or a car. They love to bury them as well as dig for them. At the end of the school year I put together a treasure hunt with clues for the kids. One of the last clues involves a key to a padlock/suitcase whatever I need to put the treasure in. This usually occur indoors with a treasure map. I still haven't found the ideal book to pair with the activity but I am still looking.

--//--

From Katie…

The best one I do that all the kids love is animal masks we do a different animal each week there are so many animals to do you’ll keep going for months.

--//--
From Tami…

A great fun idea we did was GERMS,
We made finger puppets, and colored some coloring papers, - read 2 great books and
drew pictures.
We blew up a balloon with glitter in it (preferably outside) to show how easily germs
spread with a cough or sneeze.
We also called the health dept, used their glow germ kit, to show each kid/ parent how
NOT SO GOOD they wash their hands.
We had a SICK DAY, we all came in jammies and had soup, green hospital jello,
watched movies., used gummie worms to get the worm germ at the beginning of the day.

It was great. Best theme yet!!

--//--

From Helen…

Both younger children and older children like this

Musical instrument- rain maker

Materials- Tube eg. cylinder from post office works best as sturdy, but can use tubing
from glad wrap etc
   Nails
   Coloured contact
   Rice
   Hammer

Nail numerous nails up and down the cylinder
Seal base
Add small amount of rice
Seal top
Cover cylinder with contact

Slowly turn the cylinder up and down and listen to the rain. Sounds great

--//--

From Karen…

Whenever I have Box construction out children always enjoy e.g., Boxes, sticky tape,
milk top lids and other lids big and small, and college pieces. so they can use their
imagination make robots, cars, towers or just a different looking object.
I have also enjoyed making animals out of finger prints to finger prints one on top of the other and then draw wings to make a butterfly. and lots of hand print animals butterflys, horns of a deer, legs of a chicken.

--//--

From Rachel…

I am a teacher of a pre-K class at a small co-op preschool. As a former Reading Recovery teacher, we do quite a bit of literacy work/play. One of my most popular activities is a cumulative project to present to parents at the end of the year. Each month, every child takes a day or two to draw/write about their favorite thing from the month, either from school or home. Of course at the beginning of the year, it is mostly a dictation task, with them contributing the letters or words that they can write on their own. By the end of the year, they are doing most of the writing themselves. I collect each child's pieces, and make them into a laminated and bound book at the end of the year. The children and parents alike love seeing the progress made during the year. **It is sometimes helpful to have an example to show the kids from the start of the year, for those that prefer a little direction.

--//--

From Stephanie…

I HAVE TOKEN BOXES FOR MY KIDS. THE KIDS CAN EARN AT LEAST 5 TOKENS A DAY. (1-MORNING, 3-REST TIME, 1-AFTERNOON) THEY HAVE TO HAVE AT LEAST 10 TOKENS EACH MONDAY IN ORDER TO DIG THROUGH THE "TREASURE BOX" OF SURPRISES. (I STOCK UP ON THINGS FROM THE DOLLAR STORE)

TO ENCOURAGE GOOD BEHAVIOR & GOOD CHOICES, THE CHILDREN ALSO GET RANDOM TOKENS IF I CATCH THEM DOING SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

THIS HAS BEEN SUCH A GREAT IDEA. MY KIDDOS LOVE IT. LETTING THEM DIG THROUGH THE TREASURE BOX ON MONDAY ALLOWS ME TO REMIND THEM OF THE RULES, ETC FOR THE REST OF THE WEEK.

--//--
From Anita…

I do a similar activity (an obstacle course), and then on backwards day we do it again going through the obstacle courses backwards. The laughs and gigs are the best.

--//--

From Deanna…

I like to do a lot of fine motor style activities with my three and four year olds….of course, you can incorporate many skills along the way as you do so. When doing a unit on Farm Animals, I give the kids various large prints of farms animals (depending upon which animal we are working on that day), and then they "cover" their animal with objects, by first counting out 10 objects to use, and then making that same amount of 'dots' of glue in different spots on the animals body. They then proceed to place the object upon the glue.

For example, for the Sheep….we use "cotton balls" to cover the body….therefore counting to ten several different times. (for four year olds, 20 is more challenging); for the Horse….we use brown construction paper, and make the activity into a "tearing" project; for the Pig….we use our thumbs dipped in pink paint to push and press to make thumb prints to cover the body, again counting along the way; for the Cow…the three year olds work on cutting out pre-drawn circles, and then gluing then onto the cows body, but for the four year olds, they are cutting out their own version of circle to glue to the cows body; and for the Chicken…we use "feathers" and get to count and glue again.

The children always love to use their hands in projects, so they have always appeared to love this!

--//--

From Shelley…

YOU MAKE STENCILS OF A BODY OUTLINE AND THEN YOU GET THE CHILDREN TO STICK WOOL ON FOR HAIR, WIGGLY EYES AND PIPE CLEANER FOR MOUTH. CHILDREN THEN CAN DECORATE WITH ALL DIFFERENT MATTERIALS FOR CLOTHES.

--//--

From Jane…

Here is an idea for you-- mix cornflour with water then just provide the children with spoons, whisks etc and they will have hours of fun with the mixture.

--//--
From Caroline…

Well I have a million little ideas but I find that for organization this is the greatest.

For small games or puzzles instead of sifting through snap loc bags or keeping in cardboard boxes that soon go yukky with wear and tear, simply ask for donations from the larger school community of unwanted video cases. These are sturdy stay nice and stack really well and can have inserts slipped in or simply labeled on the spine. They are also compact and perfect for teacher made resources or small games such as dominos, number cards, flashcards (or anything smallish). Organization is a breeze as they come in so many different colours so they can be colour coded and stacked on bookshelves or anywhere when limited space is available. For portable learning centres they can simply be popped in a bag and voila. They can also be purchased (really cheaply) from a variety of supermarkets, electrical stores or discount shops. Video stores often will donate surplus stocks to you (our local store donated over 400!!!!).

The best thing is that they are made from plastic so can be stored in sheds etc. without fear of rodents destroying them.

--//--

From Rosalie…

I use Q Tips to help my preschoolers spread glue on their project. I have a small piece of recycled paper for each child on that I put the glue and they have their own Q tip.

--//--

From Marie…

Here is an indoor activity that I use when I read the story 'Goldilocks and the three bears'.
I arrange 3 bowls (big, middle, little), three pillows (big, middle, little), and three chairs (big, middle, little) at the front of the mat.
I ask 9 children to come up to the front and sit down either on the chairs or next the pillows and bowls.
I then read the story of Goldilocks. As I am reading the story the children either hold up the appropriate prop correlating to the story or speak the part.
The children really love acting out this story!!
It is lots of fun for the children and I end up reading the story many times so that all children can have a go.
At the end of the story we clap our actors as they take a bow!!

--//--