

PLAYDOUGH (BIRTHDAY TIME)

Discuss with the children that we all have birthdays and today we are going to help with a Birthday Party for a friend. The party will be for a puppet friend so be sure to select a puppet of high interest to the children.

Materials/Preparation:

- Playdough of different colors
- Birthday candles
- Small plastic plates
- Butter knives
- Birthday Crown
- Large, round cookie cutters
- Vinyl place mats for each child
- Puppet
- Long rectangular table
- Rolling pins

Activity:

1. Teacher announces, “I have a puppet friend who is 4 years old today. Who would like to help give my friend a birthday party? What do children like to eat on their birthdays?”
2. Teacher then asks which kind of cake they like, and tells them the art table has playdough and utensils for making a pretend cake for the puppet.
3. Each child is given a place mat to define their area at the table.
4. The children select the color of playdough that they want to use for making the cake.
5. The children use utensils as desired by requesting them from peer/teachers.
6. The children place candles on the cake.
7. The children sing “Happy Birthday” to the puppet.
8. The teacher encourages the children to cut their cakes and serve to their peers/friends.
9. The teacher gives 5-minute warning to signal closing of the activity.
10. The children clean up with direction from teacher.

Additional Comments:

The children could do a variation of this activity by making playdough cookies for a cookie monster puppet and/or friends.



OCEAN SENSORY CENTER

This is an extension of an ocean thematic unit. The center can be present over the course of several weeks in order to address a variety of topics regarding the ocean.

Materials/Preparation:

- Sand/water table
- Sand
- Water
- Blue food coloring
- Salt
- Shells
- Shovels
- Buckets
- Strainers
- Plastic ocean animals

Activity:

1. Put sand, water, salt, food color, shells, buckets, and ocean animals in table.
2. Allow the students to explore the color, texture of the water, and dig for shells and fish.

Additional Comments:

Allow students to work in small groups of three. Encourage them to talk about what they are doing, and describe how it feels. Encourage students to share with each other.



Friendship Games



THE WOLF GAME

This is an outside game that uses two children to be “it.”

Materials/Preparation:

- A large grassy area is needed for running
- Children must be able to rote count to 12

Activity:

1. Have children line up horizontally across the field (if a fence or wall is available, have them put their backs against the wall)
2. Choose one child to be “it” and have them choose a friend to join them
3. Have the friend pair go about 10-20 yards in front of the group
4. The friendship pair is now “Mr. Wolf and his brother or sister Mr./Ms. Wolf”
5. The children lined up against the fence now say, “Mr. Wolf, Ms. Wolf, What time is it?”
6. The wolf pair then decide on a number together and yell out the time (i.e. Three O’Clock)
7. The children then as a group count to that number while taking that number of spaces.
8. Steps 5-8 are then repeated until the children get close enough to almost touch the “wolves”
9. The wolf pair then answers the question “What time is it?” by responding “Lunchtime!” and chasing the children back to the fence.
10. The teacher then chooses a new person to be “it” and the process starts over.

Additional Comments:

This activity can be a nice catalyst into a discussion on kindness and friendship. The wolves say “lunchtime” and the assumption is that the wolves are chasing the children to eat them, but what if they really wanted to invite the children to lunch?



IN AND OUT THE WINDOW

This is a game, done as a large group activity, that promotes friendship and turn taking.

Materials/Preparation:

- Have the children form a circle, holding hands
- Review the importance of safety while holding hands (i.e. it is not safe to pull each other)

Activity:

1. Choose a child from the group to be “it.”
2. Have the children, while holding hands, raise their hands in the air to form “windows.”
3. The child that is “it” goes in and out of the windows while the class sings this song: *Go in and out the windows, go in and out the windows, go in and out the windows as you have done before.*
4. The children then drop their hands, trapping the “it” inside the circle. Then the class sings: *Go in and find a friend, go in and find a friend, go in and find a friend as you have done before.*
5. The class then raises their hands again and the “it” and the friend he/she has chosen, now hold hands and together go in and out of the windows together while the class sings the song again.

Additional Comments:

There are several variations of this game. The children who are “it” can both go in the circle and find new friends allowing two new pairs to be formed, or the partner team can choose one new child to join them forming a trio.





PICK A PAIR

In this game children find a friend to line up or play with. This game enhances visual discrimination and friendships.

Materials/Preparation:

- Poster board
- Scissors
- Stickers or matching pictures
- Glue
- Cut poster board into 4 x 6 rectangles. (One for each child)
- Glue similar pictures or stickers on two cards so that you have pairs of matching cards.

Activity:

1. Shuffle the cards.
2. Let each child choose one.
3. Tell the children to find the person who has the matching card.
4. When they find their partner, they can both line up, go to a center, sit down at the table for lunch, etc.

Additional Comments:

As a variation, students can play a memory game with the cards.



WHAT'S ON THE SEASHORE?

This is an extension of an ocean thematic unit. The center can be present over the course of several weeks in order to address a variety of topics regarding the ocean.

Materials/Preparation:

- Megan McDonnell's book: *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?*
- Eric Carle's book: *A House for Hermit Crab*
- Ocean Life Memory Game (teacher produced)

Activity:

1. The teacher will read the books identified during circle time and the class will discuss aspects of the books.
2. Friendship and cooperative behaviors will be identified during the group activity (e.g., speaking when called upon).
3. Following the readings, one of the centers will contain an Ocean Life Memory game. The game will allow students the opportunity to build cooperative play behaviors (e.g., turn taking). The teacher will identify acceptable qualities of cooperative play while students are engaged in the game.

Additional Comments:

The Ocean Life Memory game cards can be teacher produced and laminated from magazines or the Internet. The books can be obtained from the school library or purchased from a bookstore or through the Internet.

McDonnell, M. (1993). *Is this a house for hermit crab?* Orchard Books.
ISBN: 0531070417

Carle, E. (2002). *A house for hermit crab.* Aladdin Library.
ISBN: 0689848943



Friendship Songs



IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

This is an adaptation of the familiar song, "If You're Happy and You Know It." It is an excellent activity for large group time and reinforces friendship-building, pro-social behaviors during play times.

Materials/Preparation:

- Sing the traditional version of "If You're Happy and You Know It" with the children several times before introducing the new activity.

Activity:

1. During a large group time, sing, "If You're Happy and You Know It." Tell the children that you would like to sing a new version of this song, but you will need their help.
2. Have them tell you things that good friends do for each other. Write down what they say and then sing the new verse together having the children act out the suggestion (i.e. if a child said, "good friends give you high-fives," write down their idea and then have the class sing the song like this: "*If You're Happy and You Know It, Give a High-five,*" having the children hug the friend sitting next to them).
3. Post the list somewhere in the classroom where the children can see it.

Additional Comments:

Other familiar songs can be adapted in a similar fashion.

FRIEND OF MINE

The circle time song helps young children introduce their friends to others.

Materials/Preparation:

- None

Activity:

1. Children gets in circle and two children get in the center. One introduces the other using the song and then they reverse roles.

Sung to Mary had a little lamb.

Will you meet a friend of mine?

Friend of mine?

Friend of mine?

Will you meet a friend of mine?

This is my friend _____ . (fill in name)

Additional Comments: