



Possibilities

Early Childhood Inclusion

Institute for Disability Studies - Project PREPARE
Mississippi's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Issue No. 23 • Summer 2010

PREPARE Essentials

This edition of *Possibilities* is dedicated to enriching art experiences for *all* children. As early childhood professionals, we have the obligation to provide meaningful play experiences in an environment that embraces the philosophy that children really do learn through play. Art is a great way for children to experiment, discover and create while playing. Art is truly a hands-on learning experience. Teachers can provide preschool children with new options in the art center such as feathers for painting, spray bottles filled with paint for squirting, colored sand in salt shakers for pasting, and aluminum foil for making collages. Children do not need an adult example of what their creations should look like but rather should have age-appropriate materials available to use to create their own unique masterpieces!

Think about the learning that happens when a child mixes two colors of paint together with a paintbrush and then puts it on paper, or when a child gets glue on his hands and everything he touches sticks to them. There are many learning benefits associated with self-selected art activities. Here are a few: children develop fine motor skills by squishing and squeezing dough and clay to shape it how they want; children enhance language skills as they describe their handiwork, as you write down their descriptions or as they tell a story about it; and children develop self-confidence as they make something as unique as themselves. The possibilities are unlimited.



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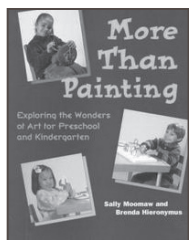
Project PREPARE is funded by the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office for Children and Youth (GR# 525Q7401A).

Book Spotlight

Preschool Art: It's the process, not the product (1994)

By MaryAnn Kohl & K. Whelan Dery

This book highlights more than 200 open-ended art activities that focus on the process rather than the end product. The ideas included in the book are based on the knowledge that young children learn through hands-on experiences, exploration and experimentation with art materials.



More Than Painting (1999)

By Sally Moomaw & Brenda Hieronymus

Included in this book are more than 100 activities that will help teachers create an art-rich classroom. In addition to the activities, this book discusses how teachers can talk with children about their art and the stages in children's artistic development.

Make Your Own Playdough, Paint and Other Craft Materials (2006)

By Patricia Caskey

This is a great book for early childhood programs on a budget. It contains more than 100 recipes for making and using craft materials such as dough, clay, paint and glitter. Children will be excited to discover the works of art they can create with craft materials that also enhance their senses of touch, taste, smell and sight.



These books can be purchased at an online bookstore such as www.barnesandnoble.com or may be available for checkout at your local library or the Mississippi Child Care Resource and Referral office.

A Perspective of Inclusion

Contributed by Lou Ann Cavet, MPH, OTR/L

Occupational Therapist with The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies

The process of creating art is a sensory experience. It often involves sight, touch, smell and body movements. Some children have sensory differences or motor difficulties that make it difficult to participate in creative art activities. Unable to put their feelings or frustrations into words, these children may display responses that could be mistaken as uncooperative or disobedient. Recognition of these responses can allow teachers to create a plan to ensure that children with sensory issues can have the same opportunity as all other children to participate in play through art. Below is one scenario of a child having problems during an art experience:

Molly is four years old and loves art but does not enjoy finger painting. The following is Molly's perspective on the situation:

"Oh my goodness, I can smell that stuff being opened. Is that stuff what we use to paint pictures? My stomach feels funny. Please, not finger paint! Last time I couldn't stand how it felt when I put my fingers in the bowl to make a picture. It was slimy, and it smelled bad. All I could do was shake my hands to get it off

as fast as I could. I said 'Yuck' and flung the stuff off my hands. Then Ms. Jones got upset because I wasted paint, and I got it on Jenny's paper. I am so sorry I messed up her paper because it was very nice. I want to make a picture for my father for Father's Day; I am just going to go get the crayons. Now Ms. Jones is mad because I got out of my chair and was not following directions. She has put me in time-out, and I can't quit crying. I will not have a picture for my father."

Molly's inability to express her feelings in words makes this situation difficult for everyone. Molly communicates the only way she knows how for her age. Ms. Jones cannot understand why one of her most cooperative students is so out of control during art. She has tried to encourage Molly, but her behavior disrupts the entire class.

Learning to recognize Molly's "misbehavior" as a sensory processing problem, together with some minor adjustments to the activity, can allow Molly to fully participate. Molly's aversion to the *feel* of paint on her hands is easily remedied by giving her another means of painting that is similar to finger painting. Tongue depressors or Q-tips can be used as an extension of the hand or finger to create art work. Molly herself may have an idea about what to use to get the paint on the paper. In this manner she participates and has an opportunity to develop that positive sense of self and confidence that were negatively affected in previous art play. The reaction to smell may be linked to Molly's prior dislike of the *feeling* of paint so the remedy mentioned above may override the smell aversion. If not, pay attention to smells that Molly enjoys flowers for instance. Scented lotion on her arms and neck, or maybe even placed under her nose, could provide the distraction needed to complete art play with paint. Better yet, ask her what would help. Children often let you know what sensory input they need to complete a task. Molly gave clues to what would make art a positive experience. Observation and planning can decrease frustrations disguised as "misbehavior" and can lead to greater creativity and self-expression during art play.

For more scenarios related to art from different children's perspectives, visit www.usm.edu/ids/prepare.

Getting Started

As with all learning centers, it is important that children have easy access to art materials for self-selection. It is helpful if materials are located on low shelving that is organized and labeled for independent use. For instance, paper is on a shelf labeled for paper and crayons are kept in a container labeled for crayons. Take pictures of items and glue them to index cards. Underneath the picture, write the word that describes the item.



Laminate the index card and tape in the appropriate place on the shelf. Children will learn where to return items after using them. For example, children will understand that the marker stand belongs where the label is located on the shelf.

According to the ECERS-R (1998), each art center should include three to five items from at least four of the following categories:

- *Drawing Materials*
Crayons, markers, pencils, colored pencils, chalk, various types of paper, chalk boards, paper plates, dry-erase boards
- *Paint Materials*
Finger paints, tempera paint, water-color paint sets, paint markers



- *3-D Materials*
Play dough, clay, pipe cleaners, carpentry items
- *Collage Materials*
Glue, various colors and sizes of scrap paper, cardboard shapes, felt, magazines, yarn/string, cotton balls, pom poms, sequins, gems, feathers, buttons, glitter, safe “junk”
- *Tools*
Safe scissors, hole punchers, tape dispenser with tape, stencils, playdough tools, sponge painters, rollers, various sizes and shapes of brushes

Resource Room

Infants & Toddlers

For infants and toddlers, art involves activities that enhance sensory experiences. Here are a few fun ideas to try. Children should always be supervised during these activities.

Powdery Fun

Gather one aluminum pie pan for each child. Place flour, cornmeal, cornstarch or potato flakes in each pie pan. Have the children put fingers and hands in the pie pan to feel the texture.

Feet Painting

Pour nontoxic paint into plastic trays or pie pans. Allow the children to step in the paint and then walk on paper while creating their own footprints. Watch for slippery feet! Provide a bucket of water for the children to rinse off their feet.

Ziploc Pat Bags

Fill the bags with nontoxic squishy items such as pudding, Cool Whip, applesauce or corn syrup. Show the children the bags and allow them to pat the bags and squish them with their little hands. Never leave young children unattended with plastic bags.

Preschoolers

Preschoolers, like infants and toddlers, enjoy the sensory experiences that art activities provide. Young children love to explore art materials and enjoy the discoveries that occur when



playing with materials in their own way. Wonderful things can happen when adults provide the materials for art and children are not limited to what they can do with them.

Outdoor Mural

Tape a long strip of butcher paper along the fence. Allow the children to use spray bottles filled with colored water or paint to create a mural together. Children will have a great time working together as they share materials and ideas about the group project.

Slide Painting

Tape a long strip of butcher paper to a playground slide. Place a tray of paint and a variety of vehicles and other toys that roll at the top of the slide. Children can experiment with gravity while enjoying this activity.

No Cook Playdough

Involve the children in making this recipe. Children can use a variety of colors to make 3-D creations.

No Cook Playdough

Recipe ingredients:

- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 packet of flavored drink mix such as Kool-Aid (for a variety of colors and scents)
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil

Directions: Mix dry ingredients. Add wet ingredients and mix well with a spoon. Knead with hands until well mixed. Place in an airtight bag or plastic container.

Upcoming Project PREPARE Training Opportunities

Early Childhood Mini-Conferences

You have the opportunity to earn four contact hours by attending one of Project PREPARE’s mini-conferences either on June 19 in Itta Bena or on August 7 in Columbus. Please make plans to attend. Registration is available online at www.usm.edu/ids/prepare, or you may register by completing the form on the back of this newsletter. For more information, please contact Becky McPhail at 601.266.6790 or toll free at 1.888.671.0051.

The Early Childhood Mini-Conferences will offer childcare providers the opportunity to choose two of four topics they want to learn more about as they earn four contact hours approved by the Mississippi State Department of Health. Workshop topics include “Engaging ALL Children,” “Reaching Optimal Development for ALL Infants and Toddlers,” “Reaching Optimal Development for ALL Preschoolers,” “Addressing Challenging Behaviors of Young Children” and “Building Relationships with ALL Children.”

For more information about including children with disabilities in your program, contact Ann Henson at 601.331.7369.

Project PREPARE Early Childhood Mini-Conference Registration Form

Check the box for location and complete the information at the bottom of the form. Please print.

<input type="checkbox"/>	June 19	Itta Bena	Mississippi Valley State University	8:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
			Social Sciences Building 14000 Hwy 82 West Itta Bena, MS 38941	
<input type="checkbox"/>	August 7	Columbus	Mississippi University for Women	8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
			Hogarth Dining Center 1100 College Street Columbus, MS 39701	

_____		_____	
Child Care Center Name		Director's Name	
_____		_____	_____
Address	City	State	Zip
_____		_____	
Child Care Center Phone Number		Fax Number	
Participant Names			

Send the registration by mail or fax:
 The University of Southern Mississippi
 Attention: Becky McPhail
 Institute for Disability Studies
 118 College Drive #5163
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Fax Number: 601.266.5114
 Attention: Becky McPhail
 Project PREPARE

For more information, please contact Becky at 601.266.6790 or 1.888.671.0051 (TTY).

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To subscribe or to submit materials (pictures, articles, etc.) for consideration, contact Kristie Bowlin at 662.397.1902 or Kristie.Bowlin@usm.edu.

Alternate formats are available upon request.



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