September Ideas
2014

September comes around so quickly. It seems we have just washed down all of the toys after last year, and it all begins again. Your class might be students who have had a preschool experience before, or your students might all be new. New or returning, after having some vacation and “out of the preschool routine”, it is always a good idea to take some time reviewing what the rules during school time are, and what your expectations for the children may be. Remember to let them know that you also have rules for yourself that you must follow during class time. Rules help keep order and are a good thing.

Take some time to introduce the different areas of your classroom. What happens in each area and when may the children use them. If you have a science table (and I hope that you do), ask them if they know what “science” is. (Science means knowledge. Science refers to a system of acquiring knowledge through observation and experimentation with active discovery and problem solving) What is on the science table? Can you take the items from the table to another area? Setting boundaries now will pay off for you later.

First Day Hunt

Coming to school in a big church with lots of rooms and different people might be a little intimidating for your students. To familiarize students with the school and personnel, take the children on a hunt for a certain goodie (cookies, fruit, stickers) around your church and school. Before school begins for the day, place a box with your “goodies” in it at the place where your “hunt” will end. Write out clue cards that you will find with the children or someone will hand you during your hunt. Maybe your hunt begins at the bathrooms. Talk about the rules for the bathrooms and get your “clue” for the next stop that you have left somewhere in the area. Now, maybe that next clue takes you to the director’s office. Who is that person, what does she do? Now, have the director hand you a clue to your next stop: pastor’s office, chapel area, lunch area, etc. When you reach the final destination of your hunt, which may be back in your classroom, there will be the special box, filled with goodies, that all your clues have led you to.

This exercise should help familiarize the children with the building and staff in which their parents leave them each day. It might help them feel a little better to know what and who is behind those doors.

Student of the Week

I know that many of you participate in some kind of “Student of the Week” program, where each child takes a turn bringing pictures from home or making a poster about themselves. Consider starting that program with YOU being the first “Student of the Week”. Consider making a poster about YOU. Have your pictures include ones of you as a baby, school pictures, vacations, your parents, where you lived, what you wanted to be when you grew up, etc. Students seem to have the idea that as teachers, we all live at the church and that our lives are very different than their life is. I think your parents will also enjoy looking at your “Student of the Week” poster.
I Am This Big

This is a project you will begin in September and finish the end of the school year. Take a close up picture of the children. Once you have the pictures, you can copy more for other uses from a black and white copier. Measure each child from head to toe. Show them in inches how tall they are and cut a piece of twine or ribbon that is that exact size and let them help you.

After you have the ribbon cut for each child, find an area in your room that you can tape one end of the ribbon to the bottom of a wall and at the top of the length, tape it to their picture and then to the wall. Each child will be represented with how tall they are. It will turn out to be a “graph” on your wall of the different heights of the children. Ask the children to look at the “graph” and see if they can tell who is the tallest and who is shorter. This will be fun to repeat at the end of the school year so the children can see how much they have grown.

(If you choose to use yarn, remember it stretches. Ribbon or heavy twine will work best)

Blow Paint Trees

If you are in a state where Fall brings brightly colored leaves this time of year, this will be a project that your students can see going on outside. Talk about the trees, the trunks and branches that support them and how they change through the seasons.

I really believe in keeping projects simple these first few weeks, until you know the capabilities and how much the children understand, but these trees turn out so nice and some even worth framing, I think they are worth a try. I would suggest that you try this first so you understand what consistency of paint you need and it will help you give the children some tips. Children are accustomed to sucking through a straw, but not always blowing through a straw. Do a fun little exercise with them before you begin, and let them blow a paper ball across the table using a straw. It will be easier for them if the straw is cut down and not full size.

For the project you will need: Heavy stock paper, straws, tape, paint

First, tape down the paper you will be using for each child so that when they are blowing, it doesn’t move. Put a puddle of paint at the bottom of the paper closest to them. This is where the tree trunk will start. Have the children blow the paint with the straw to move it up the picture and form a thicker trunk that leads to more delicate branches. Trees come in all shapes and sizes, so each one will be unique. The farther you can get the children to blow the paint up on the paper, the more branches you will have.

Let the paint dry. Next you will need to add the colorful leaves. You have several options and maybe you want to provide many of them and let the children choose. You can choose to glue on fall colors of tissue paper leaves, buttons, old puzzle pieces, glitter, or you may choose to have them dot pretty colored leaves with their fingers or use Q-tips. They will be beautiful!
At the Science Table

Science is about discovery. With that statement in mind, your science table should include items such as magnifying glasses, tape measures, rulers, scales, etc. If you do not have these items, I would ask your parents if they could help out.

Children today are surrounded by so many products and things that are man-made. They are growing up in a plastic world. Exploring outside, without adult supervision, is not what it used to be. So bring nature to the classroom. Start an avocado seed, or sweet potato in a jar of water and let the children watch the progress. Take pictures as it grows and changes and put them at the table for the children to look at. Put a tub of dirt in the classroom for the children to dig in. (mist the dirt to keep it moist enough so it is not too dusty for the children)

There are so many things that you can bring in from the outside to be on the table to look at, compare and observe. Rocks are available for everyone. They come in so many shapes and sizes, rough and smooth, different colors. Set several sizes of rocks out for the children to touch and discover the differences. How many pebbles does it take to weigh the same as one of the bigger rocks? Have a few large ones, some pebbles and then some sand in a plastic jar that they can shake and turn. You could even add some small shells to the sand, or bring in some sand from the beach to observe. How is it different than dirt? Will seeds germinate in sand or does dirt work better.

When you ask the children questions, ask questions that invite constructive input and validate prior knowledge. For example, instead of asking, “Has anyone ever seen a rock before?” ask, “What do you know about rocks?” Ask open ended questions. “What do you think might happen if…?” “What do you notice?” “What is different”? If they ask you a question that you do not know the answer to, be honest and let them know you will try to find an answer to their question.

Vocabulary Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>Commandments</th>
<th>Nature Experiment</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
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Songs and Finger Plays

Welcome Everyone
(Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)
Welcome, welcome everyone,
Now you’re here, we’ll have some fun.
We will work and we will play
We’ll have fun so many ways.
Here is what we’re going to do.
Listen, so you’ll have fun, too!
Jean Warren

Calendar Song
(Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)
When we do the calendar
We learn the month the date the year.
Every weekday has a name
Lots of numbers look the same.
Let’s begin to show you how
As we do the calendar now.
All the Leaves are Falling Down
(London Bridges)
All the leaves are falling down, falling down,
Falling down. (imitate leaves falling)
All the leaves are falling down, it is Fall.

The Leaves on the Tree
(Wheels on the bus)
The leaves on the trees are
Yellow and brown, (repeat)
The leaves on the trees are
Yellow and brown
All through the town.

Take the rake and rake them up, rake them up
Rake them up. (imitate raking leaves)
Take the rake and rake them up, it is fall

Make a pile and jump right in, jump right in
Jump right in. (children jump)
Make a pile and jump right in, it is fall.
Diane Chancy

The leaves on the trees make
A crunching sound (repeat)
Jean Warren

Little Leaves
(Ten Little Indians)
1 little, 2 little, 3 little leaves
4little, 5 little, 6 little leaves
7 little, 8 little, 9 little leaves
Blow them all away. Whoosh!

Jesus is our Friend
(London Bridges)
Jesus is our friend today
Clap your hands, shout hooray
Jesus is our friend today
We love Jesus!

God will always answer you
He hears your prayer and loves you too.

Jesus is our friend
Stomp your feet, shout hooray
Jesus is our friend today
We love Jesus

Jesus is our friend today
Turn around, shout hooray
Jesus is our friend today
We love Jesus!

Prayer Song
(Jesus loves me)
You can talk to God each day
When you bow your head and pray.
God will always answer you
He loves me so.

Jesus is our friend today
Clap your hands, shout hooray
Jesus is our friend today
We love Jesus

We love Jesus!

Jesus is our friend today
Turn around, shout hooray
Jesus is our friend today
We love Jesus!

Rhyme
God will always love me
no matter what I do
He will take good care of me,
And take good care of you.

Have a great year!