

## LEARNING CENTERS

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the following information about the different types of learning centers (or activity groups) that should be in a pre-school. After reading each section, complete the assignment as listed on the LEARNING CENTERS ASSIGNMENT SHEET. The assignment for each section is worth 10 points.

A part of every well-planned program includes learning experiences for a small group of children that are directed by one or more teachers.

The Art Center is best placed by a washable floor or a carpeted area covered with a plastic cloth, near a sink, out of the general traffic areas and preferably by a storage area.

The process and the creativity of the child in using various colors, objects and materials is much more important than the final product.

The child usually sees a picture in his mind of what the product should be like. It is important to let the child be creative. It is not necessary to have a yellow sun or green grass, for instance. Why can't the sun be green and the grass yellow? The completed art object might also be an expression of emotion or feelings and does not necessarily have to be anything.

Using various materials to create art experiences can help release emotions to allow for an original creation. A child often expresses feelings as well as ideas through art.

To make your art center enjoyable for the children:

1. Be prepared.
2. Offer support--Do not try to do the work for the child.
3. Do not compare one child's work with another.
4. Introduce a variety of objects for the children to work with.
5. Provide a variety of choices.
6. Remember children have a limited control of the muscles in their hands. 7  
Use large sheets of paper, long-handled brushes, thick chalk, thick pencils, small scissors.
7. Children have a difficult time cutting out small pieces or coloring in small areas.
8. Provide space for drying finished products.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Describe what you would do for an art center. What supplies would you need? What activities would the children do?

CHILD CARE-----INDIVIDUALIZED PROJECT

## CREATIVE ART TIPS

1. Use old toothbrushes for spatter painting.
2. When children are cutting paper, tape a cuffed paper bag to the edge of the table for scraps.
3. Old broken crayons may be shaved and shavings spread between two thicknesses of wax paper and ironed with a warm iron. Be careful not to put colors too close together.
4. Sponge pieces may be cut into various geometric shapes for sponge painting.
5. Margarine tubs make good containers for crayons or paints.
6. Pour white glue from a gallon jar into small detergent bottles. (Caution: Clear spout after each use and insert round toothpick for a stopper.)
7. For weaving cards use different shapes of notched cardboard. It can be wrapped with yarn, then later woven with another color. The best needle for young children is made by dipping the end of yarn in glue or wax. Let it dry before using. A cellophane-taped end works well, too.
8. Homemade Crayon Chubbles--Pour melted crayon wax into large, wide or tall plastic pill bottles. When hardened, dip or roll in very hot water to remove.

### SOAP PAINT

1/2 cups soap flakes  
 1 cup hot or warm water  
 Whip with an egg beater until stiff.  
 watered glue.

### SAND PAINT

1/2 cup sand (washed, dried, sifted)  
 1 Tbsp. powder paint  
 Shake onto surface brushed with

### PLAY DOUGH

1 cup flour  
 1 cup water  
 1 Tbsp. oil  
 Food coloring for desired intensity

1/2 cup salt  
 2 Tbsp. vanilla  
 1 Tbsp. alum

Mix all dry ingredients together thoroughly. Add oil and water. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until it reaches the consistency of mashed potatoes. Remove from heat and add vanilla and color. Divide into balls and work in color by kneading. Store in closed container.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Make one of the art projects or materials listed above. Describe how well they worked.



## DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER

A part of every well-planned program includes learning experiences for a small group of children that are directed by one or more teachers.

The dramatic play center should be placed in a secluded, contained area.

The dramatic play center should be set up with a representation of a real life experience. Certain rules and standards should be observed to make this an enjoyable learning experience for the children.

1. Try to duplicate the real-life situation as much as possible.
2. Keep things orderly--this invites constructive use.
3. Keep safety rules in mind and advise the children when appropriate.
4. Avoid the use of shared accessories that might present a health problem.

### DRAMATIC PLAY IDEAS

1. Post Office
2. Grocery Clerk
3. Railroad Worker
4. Baker
5. Fisher
6. Circus performers
7. Ranch hand
8. Painter
9. Police Officer
10. Doctor, Nurse
11. Pilot, Flight Attendant
12. Firefighter

**ASSIGNMENT:** Using your creativity, make fun costumes for a dramatic play area from supplies you have around your home. No money can be spent on this project. Bring your project(s) to class.

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

A part of every well-planned program for young children includes experiences for the children done as a whole group activity.

This together time is usually directed by one teacher assisted by other teachers.

Experiences in this large group activity often include the use of music, finger plays, stories, games, rhythms. At times the group may be more structured and move outside to develop large muscle activities such as games or exercises.

### TEACHING SONGS

1. Before introducing a new song, you may wish to use it as background music.
2. Children learn by repetition. Sing a new song to the children first.
3. Invite the children to join you, if they wish, as you sing the song again and again.
4. Use props such as pictures, flannel board figures, or hand actions to help the children remember the words.
5. The accompaniment, if used, should be very simple.
6. Make sure all the teachers know the song.
7. Teach one song at a time.

### TEACHING FINGER PLAYS

1. The best finger plays and action songs use the whole body.
2. Demonstrate the actions as you say or sing the words.
3. Keep actions and movement slow enough that the children can keep up.
4. Repeat the finger play several times until the children know it well.
5. Introduce new variations to an old favorite.
6. Be enthusiastic, use songs that you enjoy.
7. You may wish to send a copy of the finger play home so that parents can continue to do it with the children.
8. It is a good idea to have a large sign as a prop posted on a nearby wall for use by the teachers.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Learn one song and one finger play you can teach the class.  
Write the words and actions to be handed in.

CHILD CARE-----INDIVIDUALIZED PROJECT

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hour \_\_\_\_\_

## LEARNING CENTERS ASSIGNMENT SHEET

**INSTRUCTIONS:** After reading the information about the different types of learning centers (or activity groups) that should be in a pre-school, complete the assignment as listed below. The assignment for each section is worth 10 points.

1. Describe what you would do for an art center. What supplies would you need? What activities would the children do?
2. Make one of the art projects or materials listed above. Describe how well they worked.
3. Collect several supplies that could be used in a discovery center. Explain how you would use each item.
4. Using your creativity, make fun costumes for a dramatic play area from supplies you have around your home. No money can be spent on this project. Bring your project(s) to class.
5. Learn one song or one finger play you can teach the class. Write down the words and actions to be handed in.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hour \_\_\_\_\_

## STORYTELLING

Children often like to hear the same tale over and over. Remember these things to hold a child's attention while reading or telling a story.

1. Change the voice for different characters. Use expression (exaggerated).
2. Put in actions.
3. Ask questions as you go along to see if the child is following along and understanding.
4. Let the child help by turning pages and telling the parts of the story he/she knows.
5. Use the child's name instead of the name in the story, if possible.
6. Speak slowly and clearly.
7. If reading a book, choose one with lots of large pictures.

Your assignment is to tell or read a story to a small child. When you are finished, complete the following evaluation by placing a check mark in the appropriate column. Have one of your parent's sign this sheet at the bottom. To make your story very enjoyable to children, you should be able to answer yes to most of the questions below.

	Yes	No
1. Did the story have familiar places, people, events?	___	___
2. Did it appeal to the child's imagination?	___	___
3. Did it have lots of action?	___	___
4. Did it frighten or upset the child?	___	___
5. Did you know the story well?	___	___
6. Could the child see and hear you easily?	___	___
7. Did you have pictures to use?	___	___
8. Did you dramatize people and events?	___	___
9. Did the child enjoy your story?	___	___

I read or told a story to \_\_\_\_\_

The story I used was \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_