

A Bearrific Home Adventure

Summary

Activities help students learn to keep a journal.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - Kindergarten

[Standard 2 Objective 2](#)

Group Size

Large Groups

Materials

Invitation to Learn

- *If you take a Mouse to School*

Stuffed animal

Pictures of school workers

Construction paper

White paper

Spiral binding

School personal equipment

Instructional Procedures

- *I Know About My School*

Clothes for the bear

Notebook

Suitcase

Plain paper

Sheet protector

Crayons

Imagination!

Parent letter

Curriculum Extensions/Adaptations/ Integration

6" x 9" brown construction paper rectangle (body)

5" brown construction paper square (head)

Two 3" x 6" brown construction paper rectangles (arms)

Four 3" x 4" brown construction paper rectangle (legs and feet)

Brown construction paper scraps (ears)

Colorful construction paper scraps (bow tie)

Glue

Markers, including black

Scissors

Articles

The Mailbox, the Education Center, Inc.; ISBN 1-56234-161-8

Back-To-School Book, Preschool/Kindergarten, the Education Center, In. ISBN 1-56234-161-8

Background for Teachers

Students take turns taking home a suitcase (or a container with a handle) that includes a teddy bear, a letter to the parents, a plain piece of paper, crayons, and a journal to complete as a family. The

students then return the bag the following day and share their entries with the class. After every student has taken the suitcase home, the journal is bound into a book for the classroom library. The goal is to get parents involved with their child's school and to help the children learn how to keep a journal.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Develop; social skills and ethical responsibility.
2. Demonstrate responsible emotional and cognitive behaviors.
3. Communicate clearly in oral, artistic, written, and nonverbal form.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Read aloud *If You Take a Mouse to School*, by Laura Numeroff. Then show students a small stuffed animal. I choose a teddy bear because it is our school mascot. You could use your school mascot or have your class choose an animal. Ask them to imagine what it would be like if the teddy bear was taken to different parts of the school. Who might they meet?

In advance, the teddy bear will have visited each school worker with whom the students need to become familiar with - such as the principal, secretary, librarian, etc. Pictures were taken with the bear and the school worker. These pictures will be shown to the class. As each one is shown, the worker is introduced to the class (or is reviewed, depending on the time of the year the activity starts), telling the class the name of the worker and what he or she does for the school. Put the pictures on the dry erase board with magnets. Pass out pictures of equipment or the actual tools these school workers would use in their work. The students will take turns coming up and putting the correct picture by the correct school worker. Examples of school workers and equipment: Custodian-broom, Cook--mixing spoon, Librarian--book, secretary--telephone, Principal-large chair, Computer specialist--Computers.

The students will proudly share information about their school when they sing a song about important school workers, "I Know About My school".

Later, mount each photograph on a separate sheet of paper and add a student-generated caption.

Then bind the papers between two covers to make a class book, labeling it, *If you take a Bear to Sunrise Elementary . . . ?* (Using the name of your school).

Teach your students this song replacing the bold face word in the first verse with your school name. During the second verse, hold up a picture and name the school worker and her title in place of the bold face words. Repeat the second verse for each picture, filling in the corresponding information.

SONG: "I KNOW ABOUT MY SCHOOL"

(Sung to the tune "Skip To My Lou")

I go to class at Sunrise School.

I go to class at Sunrise School.

I go to class at Sunrise School.

I know about my new school!

Mrs. Toolson is the principal at my school.

Mrs. Toolson is the principal at my school.

Mrs. Toolson is the principal at my school.

I know about my new school!

Instructional Procedures

Fill the suitcase with all the items: A notebook, plain paper in a plastic sheet protector, teddy bear, clothes for the bear, crayons, and a letter to the parents.

Explain to the kids that this is the class bear and he will go home with each child for 2 days and be their buddy. Their responsibility is to make sure he is safe and has a nice time.

After their two days are done it is also their responsibility to work with Mom and Dad to write in the notebook all the things that the bear did while he stayed with them.

They are also to make a picture of their favorite thing they did with the bear and write a small sentence at the bottom of the picture.

All these things are then to be put back in the suitcase and brought back to school.

During the year all the pictures can be put together and laminated to make a book of all the things the bear did. The book can be added too on a weekly basis.

The journal should be kept and read each time a student adds to it.

Extensions

Curriculum Extensions/Adaptations/ Integration

Terrific Teddy (With this torn-paper technique, no two bears are alike!)

Steps:

Tear the edges of the 6" x 9" rectangle (body), 5" square (head), and the two long rectangles (arms).

Glue the head and arms to the body.

Tear the edges of the four 3" x 4" rectangles. Glue them to the project to resemble legs and feet.

Tear two ear shapes from construction paper scraps. Glue them in place.

Draw a face and add marker details to the paws and ears.

Cut a bow tie from construction paper and add desired marker details. Glue the bow tie to the bear.

At the beginning of each kindergarten year, the students could vote on the mascot they would like to have for their class. Then the mascot could be purchased and used as the animal sent home in the suit case.

Choose a class mascot; let him visit the classroom for a few days. Then take him on a school tour, including library, music class, PE, etc.

Family Connections

Students take turns taking home a book bag that includes the class mascot, a book to read with their families, a topic to discuss, and a journal to complete as a family. The students then return the bag and share their entries with the class. After every student has taken the bag home, the journal is bound into a book for the classroom library. The teacher then selects a new topic and book to start a second rotation. Example of a book and discussion: *The Kissing Hand*, asking families to write about their child starting school.

What is your favorite book? Write about what makes this book special to you. Bring it to school to show us!

Some of the students have a special pet; some may have a pet that they would like someday. They can write and tell the class about it and draw or bring a picture of the pet or the pet they would like to have.

Students will learn and appreciate the "personal treasures" of their classmates as well as their own. With the help of their families ask the students to choose and describe three treasures--one that is personal, one that is a family treasure, and one that is a cultural treasure (you may want to just focus on a personal treasure for kindergarten students). Explain that you do not necessarily mean something of monetary value. Treasures could be a language, a song, or even just a story. When the students share with the class it could be a write-up, photographs of the treasures, or the treasures themselves.

Assessment Plan

The students were able to identify the school family and explain what parts they play for the

school.

The students showed responsibility as they took the bear home, kept it safe, and brought it back at the appropriate time.

The students were able to express themselves through drawings and journal writing as they shared the bear's adventure.

The students were able to express themselves verbally as they reported the bear visit to the class.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Carr, M., (1999) *Homework*, Educational Consultant, for the LDAT Conference, November, 1999, p. 1 of 4.

Teachers play a vital role in the selection, assignment, and use of homework. Research indicates that where homework assignments are meaningful and relevant, student achievement increases.

Teachers will maximize the effectiveness of homework if they will assign activities which are relevant to the child outside of the classroom. Assign homework that enriches, reinforces, or supplements classroom instruction.

New, R. S., (2005). *An Integrated Early Childhood Curriculum*, KITS (Kansas inservice training system) Summer Institute Presenter, Fall 2005, Volume 14, Issue 4 Newsletter.

When children's learning in school is linked to their lives outside the classroom, their interests are multiplied and they often seek additional opportunities to pursue related activities. Curriculum must thus embrace the classroom environment as a place in which children can find traces of their past experiences as well as their current interests, plans, and activities, emphasizing the need for connections and continuity among the children, their activities, and their multiple (home and school) contexts of their learning and development.

Providing high-quality inclusive and heterogeneous classrooms provides the opportunity for children to learn from one another. Children have an opportunity to learn from and with others. They learn to accept and support one another, recognizing that everyone has something to give and receive preferred value in a democratic society.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)