



Color Your World

Reading aloud, singing, doing fingerplays and engaging young children in conversation are all ways that parents and caregivers lay the foundation for young children to become successful readers and writers. The following activities were created to promote literacy with young children through hands-on, real-life experiences that will stimulate learning.

Have fun and “Grow a Reader!”

RAINBOW PAINTING

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Water
- Wide paintbrush or sponge
- Tempera paints or washable markers

Directions:

1. Paint a sheet of paper with water using a wide paintbrush or a wet sponge.
2. Paint lines of color across the wet page with paints, or draw on it with washable markers

The wet paper makes the colors flow and blend for a beautiful effect.



COLOR WHEEL CARTWHEEL

(dance with wrist ribbons)

- Play a favorite CD or enjoy Laura Freeman’s “Color Wheel Cartwheel” which includes a dash of jazz, a sprinkle of country, a bit of bluegrass and a song for every color in the rainbow.
- Dance to the music with colorful wrist ribbons or scarves.

COLORING PASTA TO MAKE HOMEMADE BEADS

(recipes for colorful noodles to use as art materials)

Choose one of these ways to color uncooked pasta.

- Mix food coloring with rubbing alcohol
- Add ½ cup water with 1 TBSP cider vinegar and food coloring
- Mix 1 tablespoon water with 1 teaspoon tempera
- Use food coloring alone

Place in a plastic container or a zip-lock bag with 1 cup uncooked pasta or rice and shake. Spread on wax paper to dry overnight.

Experiment with different shapes of pasta (macaroni, wagon wheels, penne, and manicotti). Uncooked rice can also be colored this way and used as a collage material.

HANDPRINTS

Read Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh. Ask children if they remember what happened to the mice when they stepped in colorful puddles. The following activity will give children the fun of mixing colors themselves!

1. Spread yellow tempera paint in a shallow meat tray or pan. Then spread blue paint in another tray.
2. Have each child dip one hand in yellow paint and the other hand in blue.
3. Have each child make a handprint with each hand on paper.
4. Ask the children to rub their hands together and make more handprints on paper. What color did they make?

Variations:

- Try different colors!
- Try this with a friend. Have each child dip a hand into a different color paint, then rub hands with each other.
- If you and the children are feeling adventurous, dip feet into the paint and make footprints!

COLOR MIXING

(Art activities using ice trays, food coloring and eye droppers)

- Have children practice using eye droppers by moving water from one container to another.
- When children can successfully use eye droppers, fill several sections of the ice cube tray with red colored water. Do the same with yellow water and blue water. Encourage children to mix colors by moving water from one section of the ice cube tray to the other with the eyedroppers.
- Color water and freeze in trays to make “popsicle paints.” Craft sticks can be frozen in each section as handles, or have children wear mittens while painting with these frozen color cubes.



GAMES FOR ANY COLOR

I SPY GAME: The person who is “it” chooses an object within view of all players and describes it by color, saying “I spy something green.” Players will then take turns searching for and guessing green objects until the correct item has been guessed.

COLOR SHADES: Collect paint shade sample cards from a local home improvement store (two cards each of four or five different colors). Have children find matching shades.

COLORED CARS: When riding in a car, search for cars of a certain color.

COLOR PUZZLES: Cut a large shape out of a heavy piece of colored paper or craft foam. Then cut the shape into 4-8 pieces. Have children put the pieces back together.

RAINBOW KABOBS

(A colorful cooking project*)

Choose any colorful assortment of fruit (kiwi, pineapple, oranges, apples, bananas, strawberries, grapes, etc.) and cut into bite size pieces. Children can help thread fruit onto skewers to make a healthy snack.

Talk about the fruit's colors and textures with children as you make kabobs.

*All cooking activities require adult supervision



COLOR CHANGING MILK

(A science experiment that creates an explosion of color!)

Materials:

Whole milk (do not use skim or low-fat)
Dinner plate
Food coloring
Dish soap (Dawn brand works well)
Cotton swabs

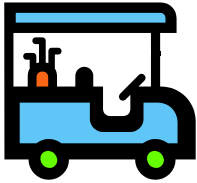
Directions:

1. Pour enough milk in the dinner plate to completely cover the bottom. Allow it to settle.
2. Add one drop each of the four colors of food coloring to the milk, keeping the drops close together in the center of the plate.
3. Predict what will happen when you touch the tip of the cotton swab to the center of the milk. (It's important not to stir the milk just touch it with the tip of the cotton swab.)
4. Place a drop of liquid soap on the tip of the cotton swab.
5. Place the soapy end of the swab back in the middle of the milk and hold it here for 10-15 seconds. Look at the burst of color!
6. Add another drop of soap to the tip of the cotton swap and try it again.
7. Experiment with placing the swab at different places in the milk. What makes the food coloring in the milk move? (See answer on next page)

How Does the Color Changing Experiment Work?

Milk is mostly water, but it also contains vitamins, minerals, proteins and tiny droplets of fat suspended in solution. When you add soap, the weak chemical bonds that hold the proteins in solution are altered. The molecules of protein and fat bend, roll, twist and contort in all directions.

There's another reason the colors explode the way they do. Since milk is mostly water, it has surface tension like water. The drops of food coloring floating on the surface tend to stay put. Liquid soap wrecks the surface tension by breaking the cohesive bonds between water molecules and allowing the colors to zing throughout the milk.



BEAN BAG GOLF

(a game to play with colorful bean bags)

- Play bean bag golf! Create your own “golf course” by placing colored paper circles within tossing distance around the room or outside.
- Challenge children to toss a bean bag of matching color onto each of the “holes” on your homemade golf course.
- The course can easily be adapted to the skill of your “golfers” by adjusting placement of the holes.
- For serious golfers (!) count the number of tosses it takes for the child to land a bean bag on the circle.

Bring books to life with these simple ideas that highlight early literacy skills.

I Went Walking by Sue Williams

Presentation Notes: A little boy sets off on a walk around the farm and sees many animals of different colors. Have the children join in with the refrain of “what did you see?” Talk about different animals found on a farm, then take turns reciting answers with the same pattern as the book having one child say “I went walking”, then the group responding with “what did you see?” Look for the visual clues to help predict which animals come next.

Skills: Narrative, Vocabulary, Print Motivation

Lemons are Not Red by Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Presentation Notes: Instead of just identifying colors and objects that go together, this book starts out with the opposite. Turn this book into a guessing game to make it more interactive and point to the color word when the answer is revealed. Have the children tell you other things that correspond to the correct color to help them practice their vocabulary.

Skills: Print Awareness, Vocabulary, Print Motivation

Freight Train by Donald Crews

Presentation Notes:

A basic description of a train, it’s different cars and where it goes creates a story that is built to enjoy over and over again. Colored text corresponds to object descriptions allowing children to “read” the color words with you as you point to text. Simple one-to-one illustrations and text are also ideal for introducing new vocabulary about trains such as caboose, hopper car, gondola car and trestle.

Skills: Print Awareness, Vocabulary

Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni

Presentation Notes: Good friends little blue and little yellow figure out that together they make green in this short but complex and delightful story of color and friendship. Use this opportunity to talk about the illustrations and what they represent. For instance, ask children to identify little yellow’s mom. Have children tear paper to make their own little blue and little yellow to take home.

Skills: Print Awareness, Narrative

Mary Wore Her Red Dress adapted and illustrated by Merle Peek

Presentation Notes: Sing along to this story of a birthday party where everyone is wearing different colors. An author's note at the end suggests that children make up their own verses about themselves and their friends adding beats to fit the syllables when necessary. Let children personalize, play and have fun with lyrics. Books to sing aloud like this are great for helping children learn the sounds in words which will help them be better readers in the future.

Skills: Phonological Awareness, Print Motivation

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Presentation Notes: While cat is asleep, three mice discover how colors mix together and ruin their perfect camouflage. Prompt children to make predictions about what happens next. Call attention to the word "cat" on the water dish. Have children talk about the role of the cat in the story. Also relate the idea of mixing colors to the book Little Blue and Little Yellow.

Skills: Letter Knowledge, Narrative

MORE GREAT BOOKS

Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See? By Bill Martin Jr.

Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson

Colors of Us by Karen Katz

Hawaii is a Rainbow by Stephanie Feeney

All the Colors of the Earth by Sheila Hamanaka

A Color of his Own by Leo Lionni

Dog's Colorful Day by Emma Dodd

