

Topic of Study – Taking Time for Hellos

Introduction

Children often experience change in their lives; change that often involves them, their families and their early care and education settings. Some children may be changing classrooms in their center or school. Some will have a new teacher. There will be children who are entering a group setting for the first time. Families may have moved across town or across the country.

While change is a part of children's lives, these new situations can be overwhelming for them. Teachers and caregivers, in concert with families, can help make the changes children encounter a positive experience for them.

The Topic of Study, **Taking Time for Hellos**, provides children with experiences that can give them the confidence to cope with the changes in their lives.

Teacher Notes

Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements (Rev. 1.1.15) requires the following:

400 PROGRAM – 401 Program Requirements for all ages

5.1 The facility shall have an approved curriculum with weekly activity plans appropriate for the developmental needs of each group of children. See Division web-site for a list of approved curricula.

To assist your program in meeting this requirement, refer to *Developing Weekly Activity Plans for Adventures in Learning* for information on how to develop your plans. In addition, 2 different examples of blank activity plan sheets are included. Feel free to make copies of the plan sheet you select and use it each week. To help you in your planning, there are also 2 samples of completed plan sheets that you may use as guides when developing weekly activity plans for your group of children.

- ***Adventures in Learning** is an Arkansas approved curriculum.*
- *Know your children and families and the changes they are experiencing. Select and adapt the activities in this Topic of Study to meet the needs of the children in your group. Make sure to involve families in as many of the activities as you can. Remember that change involves children, their families, you, and your program.*
- *Refer to page 23, **Create a Positive Classroom Environment for Children**, for a list of ideas and activities to help children make the adjustment to a new learning environment.*
- *This curriculum guide is a collection of activities that support the Big Ideas listed below. Choose those activities that best meet the needs of the children in your group.*
- *Consider extending this Topic of Study beyond a one-week period of time. There is so much for children to learn taking time for hellos. Carry over experiences from one week to another because children enjoy and learn best through repetition.*
- *If you do not have some of the featured books, refer to the Additional Books section for other books you can use.*
- *It is important to read the same book several times to children so that they have a better understanding of the theme, plot, characters and the sequence of events in the story. In each of the readings presented here, there is a different focus on what is happening in the story.*

Big Ideas

Here are four big ideas about taking time for hellos you can help children explore:

- Children should be prepared for change
- Children should be made to feel welcome in a new setting
- Children should be oriented to their new environment
- Families should be part of the process

Materials to Collect and Make

- Pictures of children and families
- Pictures of schools, school supplies and classroom activities. Laminate or cover with clear self-adhesive paper. Attach either magnetic strips or felt or Velcro strips to the backs of the pictures.
- Children's books about taking time for hellos:
 - The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn, illustrated by Ruth E. Harper & Nancy M. Leak
(also available in Spanish)
 - Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come* by Nancy Carlson
 - Franklin Goes to School* by Paulette Bourgeois, illustrated by Brenda Clark
(also available in Spanish)
 - Froggy Goes to School* by Jonathan London, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz
- Felt or Magnetic Board
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Kissing Hand*. (See Attachment: [The Kissing Hand](#))
- Prepare a backpack with school supplies
- Provide trays and non-breakable divided plates and small plastic glasses
- Illustrated charts of the daily schedule
- Clothesline (6' in length) and 12 spring-type clothespins.
- Helper Box
- Things We Do at School cube (See Attachment: [School Activities](#))

Resources

- Check with your local library for the availability of children's books.
- Children's books can be purchased online, from school supply catalogs or local bookstores.

Introducing and Concluding the Topic

Introduction: Finding out What Children Know about Hellos

Learning Goals:

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short-term and working memory and long-term memory*)

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

To introduce the topic of “taking time for hellos” you need to find out what children already know about the topic. This allows you to build on your children’s experiences. It also helps create an interest in the topic. Here’s how to begin.

- Gather the children in a group. Say, “For the next few days we’re going to be learning about taking time for hellos.”
- Write on chart paper, chalkboard or marker board the words “Taking Time for Hellos.”
- Invite children to tell you things they already know about “hellos.” Ask questions such as, “When do we say goodbye and hello to people?” “How do you feel when your family comes to get you each day?”
- Make a list of all of the things children know about “Taking Time for Hellos.”
- Review the list with them and say, “You already know a lot of things about hellos and we’ll learn even more.”
- Now ask children what they would like to know about hellos.
- Make a list of things children would like to know about hellos.
- Keep the lists until you have completed the topic of study.

Teacher Note: *Tailor this activity to meet the needs of the children in your group. For example, if this is a new group of children, focus the questions on how they feel about the situation. Talk about what they did before they came to your classroom.*

Teacher Note: *Have three headings on the chart sheet. The first heading will be “What We Know about Hellos”, the second heading will be “What Would We Like to Know about Hellos: and the third heading will be “What We Learned about Hellos.”*

| What We Know about Hellos | What We Would Like to Know about Hellos | What We Learned about Hellos |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| | | |

Conclusion: Finding out What Children Have Learned about Hellos

- Gather the children in a group at the conclusion of the study about taking time for hellos.
- Write on chart paper, chalkboard or marker board, "What We Learned about Hellos."
- Invite children to tell you some things they have learned. You may have to ask prompt questions such as "What was your favorite song about hellos?" "How can we make someone feel welcome in our classroom?"
- Make a list of all the things children learned about taking time for hellos.
- Read the first two lists you made with the children. Then say, "Here are some new things you found out about hellos" and read today's list with the children.

Teacher Note: *This method of introducing and concluding the topic is known as KWL. What do children know, what they want to know, and what did they learn.*

Teacher Note: *Tailor this activity to meet the needs of the children in your group just as you did when you introduced the topic.*

Reading Books with Children**Learning Goals:**

SE1.1 Forms trusting relationships with nurturing adults (*attachment relationships*)

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses and regulates a range of emotions

SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others

CD2.1 Focuses and sustains attention

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community*)

Book #1: *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn, illustrated by Ruth E. Harper and Nancy M. Leak

First Reading of *The Kissing Hand*

- Prepare to read the book, *The Kissing Hand*.
- Show the cover, give title, and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the words and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures)
- Invite children to look at the cover and ask if they know the name of the animals they see. If children do not know, identify the animals as raccoons.
- Invite children to look at the raccoons and describe them. (patch on face that looks like a mask, tail has black rings around it and a black tip, for example)
- Ask children to predict what the story is about.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by asking questions such as, "How did Chester feel about going to school?" "What were some things Chester's mother said he would do at school?" "Are these some of the things you do at school?"
- Invite children to talk about some of their feelings during their first days at school.

Second Reading of *The Kissing Hand*

- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Invite children to recall the name of the animals on the cover.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by showing pictures of Chester and his mother with the moon behind them.
- Ask, "When is Chester going to school?" (night) "Why do you think Chester is going to school at night?" "How would you like to go to school at night?" "How do you think going to school at night would be different than going to school in the daytime?"

Third Reading of *The Kissing Hand* (Small Group)

- Gather a small group of children, three to five.
- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Ask children what Mrs. Raccoon did that made Chester feel better about going to school. “How do you think the kissing hand made Chester feel?” “How did Mrs. Raccoon feel when Chester gave her a kissing hand?” “How would you feel if someone in your family gave you a kissing hand?”
- Trace around each child’s hand.
- Invite children to dictate what they would say to a parent or another family member. Write on each child’s hand what that child said.
- Suggest that children cut out around their hand and write their name or decorate their individual hand.
- Suggest that children take their kissing hand home and share it with their family.

Teacher Note: *Allow each child in the classroom an opportunity to participate in this small group activity.*

Book #2 *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!* by Nancy Carlson, author and illustrator**First Reading of *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!***

- Prepare to read the book *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!*
 - Show the cover, give the title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the words and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
 - Say to children, “This is Henry and he is getting ready for his first day of kindergarten.”
 - Invite children to predict what Henry’s first day of kindergarten will be like. Accept all answers. Say, “Let’s read and find out if your predictions are correct.”
 - Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
 - Follow up by asking children if Henry’s first day of kindergarten was what they predicted it would be. Invite them to recall some of the things he did in kindergarten.
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Second Reading of *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!*

- Show the cover, give the title, author and illustrator.
 - Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
 - Follow up the second reading of the story by involving children in discussing what Henry did before he went to school (washed up, got dressed, brushed teeth, ate breakfast, packed school supplies, packed photo of his mom and dad)
 - Invite children to discuss what they do before they come to the center/school.
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Third Reading of *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!*

- Show the cover, give the title, author and illustrator. Invite children to say what the author and the illustrator do.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by involving children in discussing how Henry was feeling when he got to his room and saw lots of new faces. Why did he say, “I want to go home?”
- Invite children to share their feelings about their first day at preschool or in a new classroom.

Book #3: *Franklin Goes to School* by Paulette Bourgeois, illustrated by Brenda Clark

First Reading of *Franklin Goes to School*

- Prepare to read the book, *Franklin Goes to School*.
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Ask children to look at cover and predict what story is about.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by asking children to recall some of the things Franklin did to get ready for school.
- Show the pictures in the book and invite children to name the animals that are going to school with Franklin.
- Discuss with children some of the things Franklin and the other animals did at school. "Tell me some of the things you do here that Franklin did at school." "Which do you enjoy the most?"

Second Reading of *Franklin Goes to School*

- Prepare to read the book, *Franklin Goes to School*.
- Show cover, invite children to recall the title, give author and illustrator.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by discussing with children how Franklin felt about going to school? (worried). "What were some things he was worried about?" (he couldn't write his numbers and read) "Do you remember something that Franklin did know?" (his colors)
- Invite children to recall and discuss what they remember about their first day to come to school. "What were things they were afraid of, or worried about?"

Book #4: *Froggy Goes to School* by Jonathan London, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz

First Reading of *Froggy Goes to School*

- Prepare to read the book, *Froggy Goes to School*
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Ask children to look at the cover and predict what story is about. Ask, "What are some things you think Froggy will do at school?"
- Invite them to name the animals they see on the cover
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by asking questions such as, "What surprised you about the story? "What was your favorite part of the story?" "How do you think Froggy felt when he thought he was at school in his underwear?" "How would you feel if you went to school in just your underwear?" "How do you think Froggy felt when he woke up and realized he was just dreaming about going to school in his underwear?"

Second Reading of *Froggy Goes to School*

- Prepare to read the book, *Froggy Goes to School*
- Show cover and ask children to recall the title. Give the author and illustrator.
- Follow up the second reading by showing each page and having children tell the story by looking at the pictures.
- Invite children to discuss certain pages, such as the one where Froggy has a bowl of flies for breakfast. Ask children what they think Froggy is taking to school in his lunch box. Ask children, "What was the only word Froggy knew how to read?" Children may discuss that they can read their name.

Third Reading of *Froggy Goes to School*

- Prepare to read the book, *Froggy Goes to School*
- Invite children to recall the title. Give author and illustrator.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by turning to the page where Miss Witherspoon and the children are in a circle telling what they did last summer.
- Invite the children to stand up. Clap your hands like Miss Witherspoon. Ask children to join you in saying and doing what Froggy did as he learned to swim. "Bubble, bubble, toot toot. Chicken, airplane soldier." You and children do motions together.

Teacher Note: *Children may be familiar with other Froggy books such as Froggy Gets Dressed.*

Additional Books

Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes by Eric Litwin, illustrated by James Dean

Timothy Goes to School by Rosemary Wells

Welcome to Kindergarten by Anne Rockwell

Language and Literacy Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language

CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating and moving to music

If You're Happy

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it (smile)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap, clap)

If you're sad and you know it, cry boo hoo (rub eyes)
If you're sad and you know it, cry boo hoo (rub eyes)
If you're sad and you know, then your face will surely show it (rub eyes)
If you're sad and you know it, cry boo hoo. (rub eyes)

If you're scared and you know it, look like this (make frightened face)
If you're scared and you know it, look like this (make frightened face)
If you're scared and you know it, then your face will surely show it. (make frightened face)
If you're scared and you know, look like this (make frightened face)

If you've had a good time today, shout hooray. ("Hooray!")
If you've had a good time today, shout hooray. ("Hooray!")
If you've had a good time today, and you want to come back and play, (Thumbs up)
If you've had a good time today, shout hooray. ("Hooray!")

If you like to be a helper, say "I do!" (point to self)
If you like to be a helper, say "I do!" (point to self)
If you like to be a helper, and want to help again,
If you like to be a helper, say "I do!" (point to self)

Teacher Note: *Select and sing with the children the verses that are appropriate for them. Make up new verses for different situations.*

Look Who Came to School Today!
(Sing to tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb)

Look who came to school today
School today, school today.
Look who came to school today,
_____ (child's name) came to school.

Teacher Note: *Have a picture of each child if possible. Attach it to a name tag and show it as you sing each child's name.*

The More We Get Together

The more we get together, together, together,
The more we get together, the happier we'll be.
For your friends are my friends,
And my friends are your friends.
The more we get together, the happier we'll be.

Good Morning to You

Good morning to you,
Good morning to you.
We're all in our places
With bright, shiny faces.
Oh, this is the way
To start a great day.

Learning Goal:

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

Storytelling Figures: *The Kissing Hand* (See Attachment: [The Kissing Hand](#))

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the book, *The Kissing Hand*.
- Use the storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

Learning Goals:**SE1.1 Forms trusting relationships with nurturing adults****SE1.2 Interacts with peers** (*social skills*)**LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)****LD3.1 Communicates using social and conversational rules** (*social rules of language*)**EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print** (*print knowledge*)**SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community** (*leaning community*)**Activity: Things We Do at School Cube (See Attachment: [School Activities](#))**

- Make a "Things We Do at School" cube as follows:
 - Carefully fill an empty cube shaped tissue box with crumpled newspapers. Use several sheets of paper because this will make your cube more durable.
 - Cover the cube with colored paper.
 - Glue pictures and word labels of something the children do each day to each side of the cube. For example, food items to represent lunch or snack, blocks to represent block play, crayons and paper to represent art, a book to represent story time, a climber or ball to represent outdoor play, cot to represent rest time or see attachment.
- Help the children name all of the activities on the cube.
- Ask a child to toss the cube and name the activity.
- Continue with each child having a turn to toss the cube.
- Involve children in discussing what they do during each of the activities.

Classroom Community

- Use whole group time to build on the idea of the classroom as a community.
- Discuss and include activities that children can do as a group: storytelling and reading books, singing and dancing, taking attendance and discussing who is absent, establishing and reinforcing classroom rules, and discussing problems that arise, for example.

Group Time

- Designate a space in your classroom for whole group time. The space should be large enough to accommodate all of the children and adults in the group. If your classroom is not large enough to have an area that is used solely for whole group activities, consider using the space in one of the large learning centers such as the block area.
- Provide comfortable seating on the floor. If the area doesn't have carpet or a rug, consider using carpet squares which are soft and also define each child's space.
- Allow space for charts and felt, magnetic and/or marker boards.
- Locate near an electrical outlet to play CDs for music and movement.
- Plan group time to include active involvement of the children: songs, finger plays, moving to music. Keep group time moving, vary activities, listen to the children, and limit the amount of talking you do.
- Introduce new songs, finger plays and group games to keep children interested.
- Keep in mind that young children have short attention spans. Plan several brief group times each day rather than one long one. Begin with no more than ten minutes, especially for three year olds, and expand the time as children are ready to participate for longer periods.
- Have a focus for each group time. Here are examples:
 - 1st Group Time – Greeting, taking attendance, music and movement, introducing the Topic of Study, making plans for the day
 - 2nd Group Time – Language and Literacy activities such as fingerplays and reading, telling stories with visuals such as felt or magnetic storytelling figures, allowing time for discussion of stories.
 - 3rd Group Time – Reviewing the day by involving children in discussing what they did during the day, activities they enjoyed, making plans for the next day, and concluding the Topic of Study when appropriate. Conduct this group time just before children depart.

Classroom Rules and Expectations

- Involve the children in establishing rules for the classroom.
- Gather the children in a group and introduce the idea of rules by stating that, “Our classroom is a community. When people live in a community they sometimes have rules that help them get along with each other. The rules help us understand how we are to behave in our classroom.”
- Lead a discussion about how we should treat each other and how we should care for the classroom environment. Include the word “respect”; we respect ourselves, each other and our environment.
- Guide children to establish three or four rules.
- Record the rules on a chart. Add illustrations or pictures. Post the rules where they can be reviewed with the children each day, especially at the beginning of the new program year.

Teacher Note: *Keep rules simple, few in number and stated positively. Children will usually state rules negatively. Therefore, you will have to guide them to say what they should do rather than what they shouldn't do. Adapt the rules to your program and your group of children.*

Teacher Note: *Make copies of the rules on 8 ½ x 11” paper, one per child. Invite children to illustrate their individual set of rules. Suggest that children “read” the rules with their family.*

| Our Classroom Rules |
|--|
| We use our hands for playing and for helping others. |
| We walk indoors. |
| We put away our toys. |
| We listen when someone is talking. |
| |

Rights of Each Child (Chart)

Establish with children the rights that each child in the classroom has. Discuss these rights with the children as follows:

- Each child has the right to be safe from harm. Explain to children that you are there to protect them and keep them safe. Lead children to discuss how they can help keep themselves and each other safe. For example, they will follow the safety rules for play. They will keep their hands and feet to themselves and not hit or kick other children. They will be safe with toys such as blocks which they will use for building, not hitting or throwing. They will be safe with scissors by using them to cut only paper (or things the teacher says they can cut) and by staying seated when using them. They will keep the sand in the sand table and not throw it at someone because the sand could get in a person's eyes and hurt them. They will help pick up toys and put them away so they will not get broken or so that no one will trip and fall over them. They will participate in storm and fire drills so that they can be prepared for an emergency.
- Each child has the right to be treated with respect. Explain to children that this means calling each other by their name (no name-calling), helping each other with tasks, allowing others to finish their turn with toys such as tricycles, asking for a turn with a toy rather than grabbing it, listening when another person is talking.
- Each child has the right to have personal possessions protected. Provide each child with a cubbie or locker labeled with the child's name and picture or symbol. Explain to children that each of them has a locker or cubbie which belongs only to them. Things in each child's locker or cubbie are not to be bothered by other children.
- Each child has the right to play with all toys and materials in all areas of the classroom. For example, a boy has the right to wear an apron, carry a purse and play in the home living area and a girl has the right to be a truck driver and play in the block area.
- Each child has the right to privacy. Provide a quiet, private space where a child can go to be by himself/herself. Explain to children that this is a "quiet" space for only one person. Help children understand that sometimes a person just likes to be alone.

Give children the words to use when standing up for their rights. Examples include:

- "Girls can play with blocks too."
- "I don't like it when you hit me. It hurts. Don't do it anymore."
- "Don't call me a baby. My name is _____."

Teacher Note: Consider discussing these rights with children during group time. You may want to discuss one "right" per day. Give them examples of situations and invite them to discuss how the situation could be handled. For example, if a child takes something from another child's locker, what might the owner of the locker say? If a child grabs a toy from another child, what can the child say to the "grabber"?

Teacher Note: Consider creating a chart with the rights of each child listed. For example, after discussing the first right, explain to children that they will help you create a chart titled **The Rights of Each Child**. Write the title on the chart and add the first right. Continue this process for the next four days, discussing and adding one right per day. Review the chart with the children each day. Post the chart where children can see it. Consider copying the rights on an 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper and send home for each family.

The Rights of Each Child

- ❖ Each child has the right to be safe from harm.
- ❖ Each child has the right to be treated with respect.
- ❖ Each child has the right to have personal possessions protected.
- ❖ Each child has the right to play with all toys and materials in all areas of the classroom.
- ❖ Each child has the right to privacy

Activity: Say Goodbye and Hello in Many Languages

- Learn words for hello and goodbye in other languages.
- Explain to children that some people speak a language other than English, which is what we speak, and that we should learn some words in other languages so we can communicate with others.
- Introduce to children words for hello and goodbye in other languages and invite them to say the words with you.
- Say “hello” in another language when children arrive and “goodbye” in another language when children leave for the day.

| English | Hello | Goodbye |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Spanish | Hola | Adios |
| French | Bonjour | Au revoir |
| German | Guten Tag | Auf Wiedersehen |
| Italian | Ciao | Arrivederci |
| Japanese | Konnichiwa | Sayonara |

Teacher Note: *This activity is really an important one when you have children whose home language is not English.*

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print

Activity: Say Hello Book

- Collect a photo of each child in your classroom. Photos can be brought from home by families or you can take your own.
- Create a book titled “Say Hello to the Children in Ms. (teacher’s name) Class.”
- Allow a page for each child.
- Type or write at the bottom of each page “Hello! My name is _____.”
- Write the child’s name, then insert the child’s picture at the top of his or her individual page.
- Include an individual page with photos of yourself and other staff members that children come in daily contact with.
- Show and read the book with children during group time. Consider reading it for a week or two. Children will quickly begin to read it with you.
- Place the book in the library area for children to look at independently.

Learning Goals:

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion expression*)

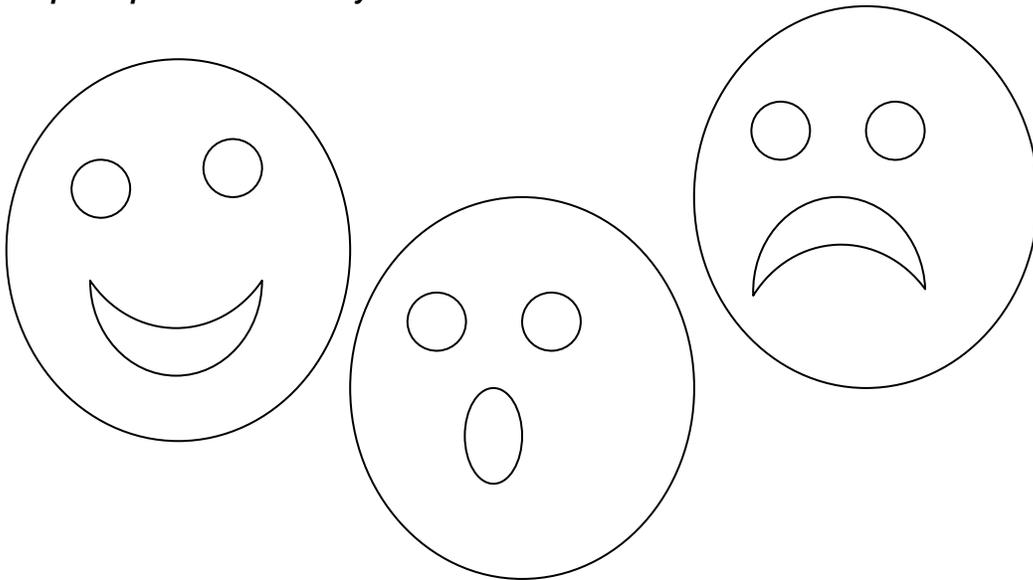
SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others

LD2.1 Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure (in child's home language) (*expressive vocabulary*)

Activity: How Do I Feel?

- Cut out 3 circles, 6" in diameter.
- Draw a happy face on one circle, a sad face on one, and a scared/afraid face on the other.
- Attach the faces to a craft stick.
- Bring the face puppets to circle time
- Show each puppet and invite children to discuss how the puppet is feeling and why the puppet is feeling that way.
- Discuss with the children the new situation they are in (new in the classroom, in a new house) or the new situation to which they are going (another classroom, kindergarten, moving to a new house, for example)
- Invite children who want a turn to select one of the puppets that represents how they are feeling and tell why he or she is feeling that way.
- Model if children seem to need help getting started. For example, say, "I am sad to see you (name the children) leaving my classroom. I certainly will miss you." or, "I am so happy to see the new children in my classroom. (Name the children). I know that we will really have a wonderful time together."

Teacher Note: *Adapt this activity to meet the needs of the children in your classroom. Do not force a child to participate in this activity!*



Learning Goals:**SE1.2 Interacts with peers** (*social skills*)**CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory** (*short-term & working memory*)**SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community** (*learning community*)**Activity: School Activities Concentration (Small Group)**(See Attachment: [School Activities](#))

- Make pairs of school activities cards: circle time, story time, lunch or snack, rest time, outdoor play, specific learning centers such as art, blocks, home living/dramatic play, library/book nook, sand, water, discovery/science, or see attachment. Laminate or cover the cards with clear adhesive for durability.
- Gather a small group of children to play the game.
- Place the cards face up, show to children and have them name the activities.
- Turn the cards over and mix them up.
- Explain to children that they will each have a turn turning over a card, naming the activity, and trying to find the matching card. Demonstrate if necessary.
- Give each child a turn.
- Continue playing the game as long as the children remain interested.

Teacher Note: *Remember that the object of the game is for children to follow directions and to develop short-term and working memory and that there are to be no winners or losers.*

Teacher Note: *Allow the children to play the game independently.*

I Spy Something

- Play “I Spy Something in _____” with the children. This activity is best done after children have been introduced to learning centers and some of the materials available in each one.
- Prepare a list of the items you want children to locate. Call two children at a time by name and say, for example, “(children’s names), I spy crayons in the art center. Can each of you find a crayon and bring it to me?” “(children’s names), “I spy shells on the discovery/science table. Can each of you find a shell and bring it to me?” Allow each child to bring you an item.

Teacher Note: *By pairing children, they can help each other locate the item. By allowing each child to bring an item, you are preventing children from arguing over who will carry the item.*

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers (*social skills*)

SE3.2 Demonstrates competence and confidence

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

Activity: Helper Box

- Cover juice cans with paper.
- Discuss with children the different jobs or tasks that they can help with in the classroom. List these tasks on a chart pad or chalk or marker board.
- Make a can to represent each job. Label each can with a classroom task such as table helper, pick up trash on the play yard, sweep sand off the sidewalk, and straighten book shelf. Add a picture or illustration that indicates the task to be accomplished.
- Place the cans in a box labeled "Helper Box."
- Print each child's name on a large craft stick (tongue depressor size).
- Decide how many helpers you will need during the week and place that number of helper sticks in a can labeled "Helpers."
- Introduce the job cans and the helper can to the children at group time.
- Involve children in discussing the tasks that each can represents and how that task is to be accomplished.
- Explain to children that each week you will place different children's names in the helper can. Assure them that new names will be added each week so that each child has an equal turn to be a helper.
- Invite children to choose a task on Monday by placing the craft stick with their name on it in the can of their choice. The job they choose will be theirs for the week.
- Allow children time to complete their tasks, helping them as needed. Acknowledge that they have completed their task.

Teacher Note: *Another way to choose helpers also uses the craft sticks with the children's names. Place the names in a "Helper Can" and pull two sticks each day. Read the names with the children as the "helpers of the day". These children are helpers for all needs for that day. Place their sticks in another can so new children are chosen each day until everyone has a turn. Then place all sticks back in the "Helper Can" and start over.*

Science/Discovery and Math

Learning Goals:

MT3.1 Participates in exploratory measurement activities and compares objects (*seriation*)

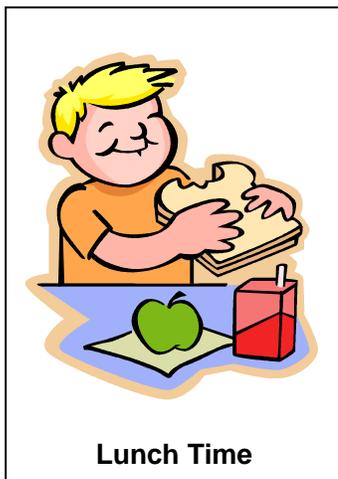
SS2.1 Shows awareness of sequence and change over time

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

Activity: Sequencing the Daily Schedule

- Establish a daily schedule for your group of children
- Collect photos or create illustrations of the main time periods in your daily schedule.
- Prepare an illustrated chart for each period of the day. Examples of periods of the day include: Arrival, Group Time, Center Time, Snack, Story Time, Clean Up, Outdoor Play, Lunch, Rest, Going Home. Include on the chart the name of the time period and a picture, photo or illustration that is representative of what occurs at that time. Laminate the charts or cover with clear self-adhesive paper for durability.
- Hang a clothesline in the area used for group time. Clip a sign, **Begin Here**, at left end of clothesline. Provide 10 or 12 spring-type clothespins.
- Gather the children in a group and show each chart in order. Involve children in discussing what is happening during each time period.
- Pin the charts in order, from children's left to right as children discuss the activity.
- Follow up by distributing the cards to children in the group.
- Consider these suggestions as to how to conduct this activity: Say, "When we come into the classroom, this is arrival time. This is when your family brings you to the center. Who has the card that shows arrival time?"
- Invite that child to use a spring-type clothespin to pin the card on the clothesline.
- Continue this activity, stating the activity in the order in which they occur in the classroom. Use terms such as "next" and "after lunch" for example.
- Review the cards with the children when all have been pinned to the clothesline.
- Hang the clothesline in a safe area. Place the cards and clothespins in a container and allow children to pin the charts to the line in the order the events occur during the day. Observe and ask questions to stimulate children to think about which chart goes next. If a child has put the rest time chart right after the arrival card, invite him or her to tell you what is happening in each card and ask, "Do we rest right after we come to the center?"

Teacher Note: Have the first child pin the first chart on the far left (child's left) side of the clothesline. The charts are to be added in sequential order.



Teacher Note: Post the charts in the room where children can easily see them.

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity & preferences*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*connection of number, numeral and quantity*)

Activity: Favorite School Activity

- Provide a choice of three activities that children are involved in: centers, lunch and outdoor play, for example
- Prepare a graph with columns for each activity. Use a picture or drawing of the activity
- Make name cards for each child in a size that will fit on the graph.
- Explain to children that they will choose the activity they like best.
- Invite each child to choose which activity is his or her favorite and tape his or her name card in the correct column on the graph.
- Involve the children in counting the number of children who like each activity.

Our Favorite School Activity

| | | | |
|---|----------|-----------|---------|
| 7 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 5 | Jonathan | | |
| 4 | James | | Miguel |
| 3 | Kennedi | Trude | Juan |
| 2 | Sam | Maria | Sarah |
| 1 | Ashley | Elizabeth | Jackson |
| | centers | lunch | outside |

- Write a summary story and read it with the children.

Our Favorite Preschool Activity

Five children like center time best. Three children like lunch the best. Four children like outside play the best.

Food/Nutrition Experience

Learning Goals:

SE1.1 Forms trusting relationships with nurturing adults

SE1.2 Interacts with peers (*social skills*)

PH2.1 Demonstrates fine motor strength, control and coordination (*hand-eye coordination*)

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordination to use tools (*utensils*)

PH3.1 Demonstrates interest in engaging in healthy eating habits and making nutritious food choices

LD3.1 Communicates using social and conversational rules (*social rules of language*)

Activity: Friendship Fruit Salad

- Gather for each child a small bowl, spoon and napkin.
- Place three kinds of fruit in individual serving bowls: mandarin oranges, pineapple tidbits, and banana slices, for example. Provide a serving spoon for each bowl.
- Sit at the table with the children and say, "We are going to share a friendship fruit salad."
- Serve yourself a spoon of one of the fruits and pass it to the child on your right and say, "(Child's name) please serve yourself some mandarin oranges and pass it to your friend, (child's name on right)." Guide each child to pass the fruit to the child on his or her right.
- Continue with the other two fruits, following the same routine.
- Enjoy the fruit with graham crackers and a glass of milk.

Teacher Note: *Allow the children to do as much of this food experiences as possible.*

Teacher Note: *Teachers and children should always wash hands before participating in a food experience.*

Teacher Note: *Be aware of food allergies and choose food items accordingly.*

Movement/Physical Education

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity*)

PH1.3 Demonstrates gross motor manipulative skills

Activity: I'm Happy to See You

- Invite children to hold hands and form a circle, then drop hands.
- Stand in the middle of the circle, bounce a ball to one child at a time and say, "I'm happy to see (child's name)." Child catches the ball and bounces it back to you
- Continue until each child's name is said.
- Hold the ball in your hand and invite children to say your name.
- Pass the ball around the circle. Invite the entire group to say the name of the child holding the ball.

Activity: Beanbag Name Game

- Invite children to hold hands and form a circle, drop hands and sit down.
- Sit in the circle with the children holding a beanbag in your hand.
- Say, "Hello, my name is (teacher's name)." and hand the beanbag to the child on your right.
- Invite the child with the beanbag to say "Hello, my name is (child says his or her name and hand the beanbag to the next child.
- Continue around the circle until the beanbag gets back to you.

Learning Centers

Teacher Note: *As children are involved in the learning centers, they are engaging in activities that support all or most of the domains of child development and early learning:*

- *Social and Emotional Development*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Physical Development and Health*
- *Language Development*
- *Emergent Literacy*
- *Mathematical Thinking*
- *Science and Technology*
- *Social Studies*
- *Creativity and Aesthetics*

However, there will also be activities included and these will have specific learning goals.

Learning Goals:

CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community*)

Activity: Introducing Children to Learning Centers

- Introduce children who are new to your classroom to each of the learning centers. If possible, do this in small groups.
- Stock the centers with basic items at the beginning of the program year. Add additional materials as children become more comfortable with how to select, play with, and put away toys and materials.
- Gather the children in one learning center at a time.
- Tell children the name of the center and call attention to the posted center sign.
- Allow children to explore the materials in the center. Model the way to use the materials.
- Demonstrate to children the appropriate way to select the materials and put them away. Call attention to the labels on shelves and on storage containers.
- Let children know if only a certain number of children can play in each center and how children will know this.

Art Center

Provide art materials that children can use independently; crayons and plain paper

Learning Goals:

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connections to family and community (*learning community*)

Activity: Hands Are for Helping Mural

- Cut a large piece of butcher paper from a roll.
- Write across the top, "Hands Are for Helping"
- Provide three colors of tempera paint: red, blue and yellow. Pour paint on folded paper towels in pie pans.
- Invite each child to press his or hand in the paint soaked towels in the color of his or her choice and make a handprint on the paper.
- Label each handprint with that child's name.
- Invite children to tell you some ways that hands can help and write their comments on the mural. For example, children may say, "Hands can pick up toys." "Hands can hug someone."
- Post the mural on the wall at children's eye level.
- Help children locate their handprint and the handprints of other children in the group.

Block Center

- Add a small school bus
 - Add traffic signs
 - Add a small playhouse, furniture and people figures
 - Add small boxes
-

Library/Book Corner

- Add books about hellos.
 - Add felt/magnetic story figures for the story, *The Kissing Hand*, and felt or magnetic board.
 - Add magnetic or felt board and magnetic or felt pictures that represent the changes children in your classroom are experiencing
-

Home Living/Dramatic Play

Provide prop boxes that encourage children to interact with each other as they use the props to act out scenes related to becoming a member of a new group.

Learning Goal:

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community*)

CA3.1 Explores feelings, relationships, and concepts through imitation, pretend play and sociodramatic play (*exploration of drama*)

- Create a school prop box to add to the home living area. Include pencils, crayons, paper, a nametag for each child, and several children's books.
 - Add trays, unbreakable divided plates and small plastic glasses. Join in children's play and say, "I'm going through the cafeteria line to get my lunch." Put plate and glass on tray and take it to the table.
 - Set up a store to sell school supplies. Include pencils, crayons, markers, paper, books, and backpacks, for example. Add cards for making labels and price tags for the items.
-

Manipulatives

- Select materials that children can use independently; simple puzzles and self-correcting toys such as pegs and pegboards
-

Quiet Corner

Learning Goal:

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion regulation*)

- Create a quiet corner in your classroom; a place where children can go to be alone and to get away from the stresses of group living.
- Place soft items in the quiet corner. Carpet on the floor, soft pillows, and soft and cuddly stuffed animals or dolls are examples.
- Discuss with children when they might want to go to the quiet corner. When they are angry and need to get away from the source of their anger? When they are sad and need to be alone? When the room gets too noisy and they need a quiet spot?
- Explain to children that the quiet corner is for one child at a time.

Transition Activities

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity and preferences*)

CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts (*adjusts behavior to / match context*)

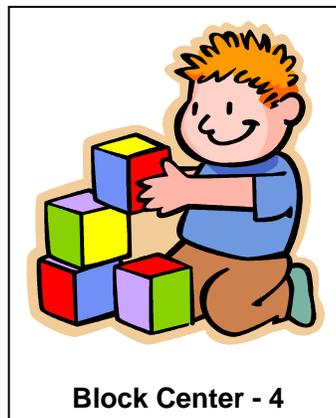
EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

Kissing Hand Name Tags

- Make a kissing hand for each child and add the child's name in the center of the hand.
- Show the kissing hands, one at a time, and invite children to identify their names and go to the next activity.

Learning Center Cards

- Make a set of cards representing each of the learning centers you have available for children during the time they select where to play. For example, make a card on which you write "Art Center" and add a picture of crayons and markers, a card on which you write "Block Center" and add a picture of one of the types of blocks you have available. On each card write the number of children who can be in that center. For example, if four children can play in the block center, write the numeral 4 on that card.
- Show each card to the children, discuss with them the name of the center and some of the materials they will find there, and the number of children who can play in that center at one time.
- Turn the cards face up on the floor as children are preparing to go from group time to learning center time.
- Show a child's name card and help the child recognize his or her name card. Invite the child to select a center card. Help the child name the center and discuss what he or she might do in the center.
- Ask the child to go to the selected center.
- Remove a learning center card when the designated number of children have selected that center.



Teacher Note: *Have a fair system for allowing children to select a center. For example, have the children's name cards in the same order each day. When the first child has selected a learning center, put that child's name card last in the stack.*

Family Connection and Engagement

Send home a note to parents stating for the next few days the children will be learning about taking time for hellos. How families can be involved in the topic of study will depend on the situation of each child and his or her family.

Suggest some ways families can be involved in the topic of study:

- Send photos of their child and family members. Indicate on the back of the photo the names of the family members. (for new children in the classroom)
- Include the titles and authors of some of the children's books about hellos. Suggest that they look for these books in the local library, check them out and read them with their child.
- Send home *The Kissing Hand* activity sheets from *The Family Connection*, pages 24 and 25.
- Read the book, *The Kissing Hand*, with children and families at family orientation.
- Create a Take Home Bag for each child in your classroom. Use a one gallon self-closing plastic bag. On the bag write "Take Home Bag" and the child's name. Explain to families that everything from the classroom will be sent home in that bag; notes, newsletters, book order forms, for example. Request that families return the bag to you with items such as notes and completed book orders. Have extra bags for families who lose theirs.
- Send home an 8 ½ x 11" copy of the classroom rules which the child has illustrated. Suggest that families invite their child to "read" the rules to them and discuss the reasons for the rules.

Creating a Positive Classroom Environment for Children

Think of the children who will be coming into your classroom at the beginning of the program year. For some, this may be their first time away from home or their first time in a group setting. Think of the social and emotional environment you create as well as the physical environment you provide for the children. How can you create a positive classroom environment for the children?

Consider these ideas and experiences:

- Be available to greet children and families as they arrive. Allow time for “good byes.” Help children make the transition from home to classroom. Assure families that you will take good care of their children.
- Be available to tell children “good bye” as they leave your classroom. Let the children and their families know of some of the activities planned for the next day.
- Have a “quiet” space in your classroom where children can go to be alone as they make the transition from home to the classroom. Let children know where it is and its purpose.
- Label cubbies with names and/or photos. Show each child his/her cubbie and explain its purpose.
- Take photos of children, label with each child’s name and post on classroom wall at child’s eye level.
- Take photos of children and their families, label them and post on wall at child’s eye level.
- Provide name tags with a photo or special sticker that each child selects.
- Sing songs using children’s names.
- Read and have in the library books that reflect children and their families.
- Read books that focus on feelings children may be having about coming into the classroom. Allow children to verbalize their feelings.
- Select activities that children can do independently; simple puzzles, self-correcting toys such as pegs and pegboards, and crayons and plain paper.
- Take children on a tour of the classroom.
- Introduce children, preferably in small groups, to learning centers. Have basic items in each center. Tell children the name of each center. Let them explore the materials. Discuss with them the correct way to select, play with and put away materials.
- Have centers, shelves and storage containers labeled with words and pictures. Have labels in a 2nd language if some children’s home language is not English.
- Introduce children to the bathroom and explain toileting and hand-washing procedures. Post an illustrated hand-washing chart where children can see it as they wash and dry their hands.
- Ask each child to draw a self-portrait. Label with child’s name and date. This is a good item to include in a child’s portfolio.
- Send notes to families describing some of the positive things that happened in the classroom. Read notes with children before sending them home.

Teacher Note: *The ideas contained in this attachment came from Pre-K Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas, Trainer Manual (2006), pages 73 and 74.*

THE CLASSROOM CONNECTION

“Reading a Story: *The Kissing Hand*”

Remember your first days at preschool or kindergarten. Did you feel lonely or afraid when your family left? We understand these feelings in the children in our classroom; so we plan activities to help children make the transition from home to a new setting.

Here are some things we do to make it easier for children to separate from their families.

- We read the book, “*The Kissing Hand*” by Audrey Penn, as new children enter our classroom.

This is a story about Chester Raccoon. Chester is going to school for the first time and is afraid. His mother shares a family secret with him to help him feel less afraid. She places a kiss in the palm of his hand. She tells him when his is lonely, he is to press his hand to his face and remember that she loves him. Just before Chester goes to school, he gives his mother a “kissing hand” so she can know he loves her too.

- We read and discuss the book several times.
- We invite children to talk about some of their feelings during their first days at school.
- We trace an outline of each child’s hand and help the child cut it out.
- We send the “kissing hand” activity home with each child to share with his/her family.

See **The Family Connection Activity** to get ideas for making your child’s “kissing hand” special.

This is what happens when children can easily separate from their families.

- Children enjoy their classroom experiences.
- Children are better able to concentrate on classroom activities.
- Children help their families feel good about leaving their children with us.

THE FAMILY CONNECTION

“Reading a Story: *The Kissing Hand*”

You will need: Crayons
An outline of your child’s hand that has been sent home by your child’s teacher or that you have traced on paper or poster board

Try This!

- Invite your child to recall the events in the book, *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn. Use his/her hand outline as a reminder.
- Help your child decide how to make his/her “kissing hand” special. Here are some suggestions:
 - Give the hand a simple kiss. That’s what Chester Raccoon and his mother did. (Lipstick makes the kiss show!)
 - Add a heart drawing or heart sticker.
 - Glue a family photo to the hand.
 - Write the words “I love you” on the hand.
 - Have each family member “autograph” the hand.
- Encourage your child to take his/her special “kissing hand” back to school for sharing or for comfort.

