

Topic of Study – We Live In Different Types of Communities

Introduction to Topic

Children in your classroom live with their families in different types of communities. For example, each community is different in setting, size and services provided.

When children enter your classroom they become part of another community; the classroom community which is also a part of the center/school community. Teachers and caregivers are responsible for creating a place where children can come together each day and feel safe and know that they are a valued member of the classroom community.

During this topic of study children will learn more about the community in which they live with their family and the classroom and center/school community.

The activities suggested in this topic of study for the classroom community are appropriate for any group of children. When planning activities that focus on the community in which children live with their families, you will want to adapt the activities for your particular group of children.

Teacher Notes

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

400 Program – 401 Program Requirements for all ages

5.a The facility shall have an approved curriculum with weekly activity plans appropriate for the developmental needs of each group of children.

To assist your program in meeting this requirement, refer to Developing Weekly Activity Plans for Adventures in Learning 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 activity plans for your group of children.

- ***Adventures in Learning is an Arkansas approved curriculum.***
- *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 about communities. Carry over experiences from one week to another because children enjoy and learn best through repetition.*
- *If you do not have one of the features 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 sequence of events. 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 communities you can help children explore:

- I live in a community with my family.
- I live in a classroom community which is also part of a center/school community.
- People living in communities learn to live, work and play together.
- Different communities offer different types of services for the people who live there.

Materials to Collect and Make

- Children's books about communities
Froggy Goes to School by Jonathan London, illustrated by Frank Remkiewick
Curious George and the Dump Truck by Margret and H. A. Rey
- Felt or Magnetic Board
Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Kissing Hand* (See Attachment: [The Kissing Hand](#))
- Rhythm sticks, either made or purchased. See page 18 for information on how to make rhythm sticks.
- Library Prop Box: several children's books, cards with the name of one of the books on each card, a date stamp, stamp pad and pencils

	Rey, Margret and H. A. <i>Curious George and the Dump Truck</i>
Date	Name
	(Note: Add plenty of lines)

- Post Office/Mail Carrier Prop Box: mail bag, mail box made from shoe box with large slot in lid, paper, pencils, junk mail, junk mail stamps and stickers, name cards for each child, envelopes, shirt with a US Post Office label on pocket
- Barbershop/Hairdresser Prop Box: empty plastic shampoo bottles with labels, wigs on stands, curlers and pins, hair dryer (minus electric cord), towels, basin, smocks, sign with services provided and prices, hair styling magazines for the waiting room
- Service Station/Car Wash for outdoors: Attach a piece of rubber or plastic hose to a long, cylindrical box and write numerals near the top with markers. Add a few rags and a bucket.

Teacher Note: Select the prop boxes that are of most interest to your children and for which you have the most props. Prop boxes can be added to the Dramatic Play center throughout the program year and do not necessarily have to relate to the current Topic of Study.

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.
- Rhythm sticks (lumi sticks) can be ordered from equipment catalogs and from school supply catalogs.
- Contact your local library for information about the services available for families, especially children’s programs. Ask for printed information that you can share with families, including information on how to obtain a library card.

Introducing and Concluding the Topic

Introduction: Finding out What Children Know about Communities

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 “community” 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 two types of communities; our classroom community and the community in which we live with our families.
- Explain to children that in a community people live, work and play together.
- Write on chart paper, chalkboard or marker board the words “Our Community.”
- Invite children to tell you some things they do together in the classroom community. Examples include: sing, read stories, play games, eat, work and play in learning centers, and play together outdoors
- Say, “You also live in a community with your family. Can you tell me about the people and places in your neighborhood?” You may have to ask prompt questions such as, “Who lives near you? How is garbage collected in your neighborhood? Who delivers your mail?”
- Review the list with them and say, “You already know a lot of things about our classroom community and the community in which you live with your family and we’ll learn even more.”
- Now ask children what they would like to learn about their community.
- Make a list of things children would like to know about their community.
- Keep the two lists until you have completed the topic of study.

What We Know about Our Community	What We Would Like to Know about Our Community	Things We Learned about Our Community

Conclusion: Finding out What Children have Learned about Communities

- Gather the children in a group at the conclusion of the study about communities.
- Write on chart paper, chalkboard or marker board, "Things We Learned about Our Community."
- Invite children to tell you some things they have learned. You may have to ask prompt questions such as "What are some things we did together in our classroom this week?" "How did we help each other?" "Who are people in the community who help you and your family?"
- Make a list of all the things children learned about communities.
- Read the first two lists you made with the children. Then say, "Here are some new things you found out about communities" 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.*

Reading Books with Children

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

CD2.1 Focuses and sustains attention

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences*)

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

Book #1 *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.)
- Invite children to look at the cover and predict what story is about. Ask, "What are some things you think Froggy will do at school?"
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by inviting children to name everyone who is in the classroom and school community: Miss Witherspoon, teacher, classmates Turtle, Beaver, and Duck, and Mr. Mugwort, principal.

Teacher Note: *Before reading the story with children, discuss with them that in a classroom community we read books together.*

Second 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.
- Ask children if they recall who was in Froggy's classroom. Who visited the classroom?
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading by turning to the page where Miss Witherspoon and the children are in a circle telling what they did last summer. Ask the children to stand up. Clap your hands like Miss Witherspoon does. Ask children to join you in saying and doing what Froggy did as he learned to swim: "Bubble, bubble, toot, toot. Chicken, airplane, soldier."

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

Book #2 *Curious George and the Dump Truck* by Margret and H. A. Rey, author and illustrator

First Reading of *Curious George and the Dump Truck*

- Prepare to read the book, *Curious George and the Dump Truck*
- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the story and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Explain to children that the word “curious” means wanting to know things, and that George is a curious monkey.
- Show the cover and ask children what they think the dump truck is used for.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Stop after reading the page with these words, “Some workmen with a big truck were fixing the holes in the street.” Ask children if their predictions about the dump truck were correct.
- Continue to read the story, pausing after reading the page where George is pulling all the levers and ask children what they think will happen now.
- Continue to read the story to the end.
- Follow up by involving children in discussing the following questions: “How do you think the workers felt when they saw the mess George had made?” “How do you think George felt when the workers shouted ‘Grab that monkey!’?” “How did George help the police catch the robbers?”

Second Reading of *Curious George and the Dump Truck*

- Prepare to read the book, *Curious George and the Dump Truck*
- Show cover and invite children to recall title. State author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the **Second Reading** by involving children in discussing what they know about street, road and highway repairs. Have they seen people repairing streets or highways? Describe some things they observed.

Third Reading of *Curious George and the Dump Truck*

- Prepare to read the book, *Curious George and the Dump Truck*.
- Show cover and give title, author and illustrator.
- Invite children to recall what George did in the dump truck that got him in trouble.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the **Third Reading** by showing each page and having children tell the story by looking at the pictures.

Additional Books

A Letter to Amy by Ezra Jack Keats

Career Day by Anne Rockwell

Check It Out! The Book about Libraries by Gail Gibbons

D. W.’s Library Card by Marc Brown

The Jolly Postman by Janet and Allan Ahlberg

Maisy Goes to the Library by Lucy Cousins

The Post Office Book: Mail and How It Moves by Gail Gibbons

Language Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language (*rhyme*)

CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating, and moving to music (*exploration of music and movement*)

Teacher Note: *Introduce a song or finger play by telling children that these are things that we do together in a classroom community.*

We Came to School Today

Jonathan, James, Kennedy and Jill,

Came to school today.

Ashley, Maria, Juan and Sarah

Learn together as they play.

Teacher Note: *Substitute the names that are underlined with the names of the children in your class. Repeat as many times as necessary so all children are named.*

Teacher Note: *See page 19: **Tips for Introducing Music to Children***

Good to Have You with Us Chant

It was good to have you with us today.
It was good to have you, (child's name).
It was good to have you with us today.
I'll (we'll) see you in the morning (on Monday).

Teacher Note: *Sing this song or say this chant as children are leaving to go home.*

This Is the Way

(Sing to the tune of Mulberry Bush)

This is the way we sing together,
Sing together, sing together.
This is the way we sing together,
With our (preschool/pre-k) friends.

The More We Get Together

(Sing to the tune of Did You Ever See a Lassie)

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.

If You're Happy

If you're happy in our classroom, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you're happy in our classroom, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you're happy in our classroom, then let your face show it (smile)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap, clap)

If you like to play in centers, shout hooray. ("Hooray!")
If you like to play in centers, shout hooray. (Hooray!)
If you like to play in centers, and want to play today,
If you like to play in centers, shout hooray. ("Hooray!")

If you like to hear our stories, say, "Yes, I do!" ("Yes, I do!")
If you like to hear our stories, say, "Yes, I do!" ("Yes, I do!")
If you like to hear our stories, and want to hear some more, (Shake head "Yes")
If you like to hear our stories, say, "Yes, I do!" ("Yes, I do!")

If you like to sing together, sing, "Oh, yes!" ("Oh, yes!")
If you like to sing together, sing, "Oh, yes!" ("Oh, yes!")
If you like to sing together, and sing your favorite song,
If you like to sing together, sing, "Oh, yes!" ("Oh, yes!")

If you like to go outside, say, "I can't wait!" ("I can't wait!")
If you like to go outside, say, "I can't wait!" ("I can't wait!")
If you like to go outside and run and play with friends, (Make running motions with fingers)
If you like to go outside, say, "I can't wait!" ("I can't wait!")

If you've had a good time today, say, "Yes I did!" ("Yes I did!")
If you've had a good time today, say, "Yes I did!" ("Yes I did!")
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, say, "Yes I did!" ("Yes I did!")

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.
- Discuss with children some of the things that Chester's mother said he and the children would do together at school. Ask children if these are some of the things they do in their classroom.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with the children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child’s home language) *(follows directions)*
CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating, and moving to music *(music and movement concepts)*

Activity: Play Rhythm Sticks Together

- Provide two rhythm sticks per child for this activity. Rhythm sticks can be purchased or made. Store sticks in a large can or basket.
- Invite children to hold hands, make a circle, drop hands and sit on the floor.
- Pass basket around the circle and ask each child to get two rhythm sticks from the container.
- Explain to children that these are rhythm sticks.
- Ask, “*Can you use your rhythm sticks like drum sticks and play the drum?*” Demonstrate striking the floor as if playing a drum and invite children to do the same.
- Ask, “*Can you play the drum loudly?*” “*Now, can you play the drum softly?*”
- Allow children to practice “hard” and “soft” until they begin to understand and put into practice this concept.



Teacher Note: See page 19: **Tips for Involving Children in Music Activities** for directions on how to use rhythm sticks with children.

Activity: Ten Little Drummers

- Explain to children that they will play the rhythm sticks to the song, “Ten Little Drummers.” (Tune: “Ten Little Indians”) Strike the sticks where underlined.

One little, two little, three little drummers.
(strike) (strike) (strike) (strike)

Four little, five little, six little drummers.
(strike) (strike) (strike) (strike)

Seven little, eight little, nine little drummers,
(strike) (strike) (strike) (strike)

Ten little drummer boys and girls.
(strike) (strike) (strike)(strike)(strike)

Learning Goals:

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

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community and awareness of roles in society*)

Activity: People in our Classroom and Center/School Community

- Write on a chart pad, marker board or chalk board the following: **People in our Classroom and School/Center Community**
- Involve children in naming the different people who are part of your particular classroom and center/school community.
- Record the people or categories of people that children name and their title or a word or two that describes them. An example follows:

**People in Our Classroom and
School/Center Community**

18 children in our class
Ms. Robin and Ms. Teresa, Teachers
Babies and Toddlers and their teachers
Ms. Edwards, Director or Ms. Edwards, Principal
Cafeteria Workers/Cook
Custodian/Cleaning People

- Review the list with the children and discuss each group.
- Suggest that children draw pictures of some of the people they named.

Teacher Notes:

- *Use terms that apply to your program; for example school or center, director or principal.*
- *Develop the list with the children based on the people who are part of your particular center or school. If children know the name of the people, include them.*

Learning Goals:

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

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language in child's home language (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

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

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*awareness of roles in society*)

Activity: My Family's Community

- Remind children that they also live in a community with their family.
- Pose some questions that stimulate children to identify and discuss some of the people and services that are part of the community in which they live with their family. Examples of questions follow:
 - Suppose your washing machine and dryer are broken. Where would you go to wash and dry your clothes? (Laundromat, or children may say the name of the Laundromat)
 - Where could you go to wash your car? (car wash)
 - Suppose you need gas for your car. Where would you go?
 - Suppose the family car/truck is broken. Where would you go to get it repaired?
 - Who brings the mail to your house?
 - Where can you go to check out books and bring home to read?
 - If the street/road in your community has a big hole in it, who fixes it?
 - If you want to get a haircut or have your hair styled, where do you go?
 - How is the garbage picked up at your house?

Learning Goals:

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

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

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

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*learning community and awareness of roles in society*)

Activity: You Are Invited

- Discuss with children inviting someone from the school/center community or from the local community to have snack or lunch with them.
- Allow the children to help select the person.
- Involve children in writing an invitation to that person.
- Allow children to sign their names to the invitation.
- Assist that day's table helper(s) in setting a place at the table for the guest.
- Consider having name tags or place cards for everyone at the table so that the guest can call children by name. You or the children can write each child's name on the card and allow children to decorate their individual cards.

Dear Ms. Edwards,

You are invited to join us for lunch on Friday, October 14, 2016, at 11:15 p.m.

We really hope that you can come. We are having spaghetti and salad and apples for lunch.

Your Friends in Ms. Robin's Class

Teacher Notes:

- *Adapt this activity to fit your particular setting. In one program it may be a director or principal who is invited. In another program it may be a toddler teacher who can join you on her lunch break.*
- *Consider inviting a member of the community to visit your classroom for a meal or for an activity such as story time. The children's librarian at the local library can be invited to come in and read or tell a story with puppets.*
- *Consider having a Purple Cow Party for people in the school/center community. Refer to the **Food/Nutrition Section** for the **Activity: Purple Cow Party.***

Learning Goals:

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

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

Activity: Library Cards

- Involve each child in making a library card to be used in the classroom library area.
- Place each child's library card in a basket in the library area.
- Provide in the library area a box labeled: **Place library cards in this box.**
- Suggest that when children go to the library area they locate their individual card in the basket and place it in the box.
- Collect cards at the end of the day and return to the basket.
- Note the children who are spending time in the library area and those who are not. Focus on ways to entice all children to spend some time in the library area.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Learning Tree School Library</u> (Substitute name of your school/center) <u>Hot Springs, AR</u> (Substitute location of your center)</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">(Child's Name)</p>
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Learning Goal:

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

Activity: Taking Care of Books (Small Group)

- Invite a small group of children, 3 to 5, to join you in the library area.
- Select a book from the book shelf and ask each child, one at a time, to also select a book.
- Sit on the floor with the children and invite them to "read" the book they selected.
- Model and discuss with children turning the pages one at a time and from front to back.
- Allow children a few minutes to look at the book they selected.
- Return your book to the book shelf so that it is right side up and the cover is facing forward.
- Invite children to return their books to the book shelf, following your model.
- Follow up by discussing with children the correct way to select, look at and put away books.

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

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

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: A Time for Creating a Sense of the Classroom as a Community

- 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 or 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.

Learning Goals:

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

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

Classroom Rules

- 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."
- 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 Notes:

- *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.*
- *Make copies of the rules on 8 1/2 x 11" paper, one for each child. Invite children to illustrate their individual set of rules. Suggest that children "read" the rules with their family.*

Our Classroom Rules
We keep our hands and feet to ourselves.
We walk indoors.
We put away our toys.
We listen when someone is talking.

Science/Discovery and Math

Learning Goals:

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

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

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

Activity: Favorite Together Activity

- Provide a choice of three activities that children are involved in together: finger plays, singing and stories, 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.
- Introduce the activity by singing a couple of children's favorite songs, saying a couple of their favorite finger plays, and showing them the covers of a couple of their favorite books and asking them to recall something about the story.
- 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 Together Activity

7			
6			
5	Jonathan		
4	James		Miguel
3	Kennedi	Trude	Juan
2	Sam	Maria	Sarah
1	Ashley	Elizabeth	Jackson
	Finger plays	Singing	Stories

- Write a summary story.

Our Favorite Together Activity

Five children like finger plays best. Three children like singing the best.
Four children like stories the best.

Food/Nutrition Experience

Learning Goals:

PH3.1 Demonstrates interest in engaging in healthy eating habits and making nutritious food choices
(*exploration of food experiences*)

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

Activity: Purple Cow Party

- Plan a Purple Cow Party for invited guests from the school/center community or the local community.
- Gather grape juice (plastic jar), frozen vanilla yogurt, cups and spoons and napkins for each child and for each guest.
- Invite children to sit at the table and say the poem that is written below.
- Explain that everyone will now make a "Purple Cow" for snack.
- Help each child add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup frozen vanilla yogurt into a cup and pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grape juice on top.
- Eat with a spoon and enjoy.

Purple Cow

I've never seen a purple cow,
I never hope to see one.
But if by chance I ever do,
I'd rather see than be one.

Teacher Notes:

- *Allow the children to do as much of this food experiences as possible.*
- *Consider having the poem and recipe for **Purple Cow** written on a card for each guest.*
- *Teachers and children should always wash hands before participating in a food experience.*

Movement/Physical Education

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

PH1.2 Shows stability and balance

Activity: Parachute/Blanket Play

- Provide a purchased nylon parachute, blanket or sheet for the children.
- Place parachute on the ground/floor and have children sit around it. Space children evenly around the parachute.
- Ask children to grab the handle or the edge of the parachute and stand, continuing to hold on.
- Invite children to make tiny waves with the parachute by waving arms up and down.
- Place a beach ball on the parachute and guide children to move the ball on the parachute without causing it to roll off.
- Ask children to sit down while still holding on to the parachute.
- Collect the parachute and put it away.
- Repeat the activity on other days. As children become skilled at working together, suggest that they wave the parachute to toss the ball and catch it again.
- Designate a child to retrieve the ball if it should fall off the parachute. Do this in advance of placing the ball on the parachute to prevent all children from running after the ball when it rolls off.

Teacher Note:

- *Involve yourself in the parachute play. Your involvement will provide a role model for the children and will allow you to know when children need redirection or are getting tired. Children can easily get out of control during parachute play if the adult fails to explain the proper way to play with the parachute, is disengaged in the play, or allows children to become overly tired.*
- *Consider ordering from a school supply company a CD that contains parachute activities.*

Learning Goals:**SE.1.2 Interacts with peers****PH1.3 Demonstrates gross motor manipulative skills** (*catching and throwing*)**Activity: Toss the Beanbag to a Friend**

- Prepare for this activity by having the following available: one beanbag per two children.
- Create with string or rope two lines from 4 to 6 feet apart.
- Have ½ of the children stand just behind one line and the other ½ stand just behind the other line.
- Make sure that the children in each line are directly opposite each other and that the children in each line have space between them so they can toss and catch without touching each other.
- Use an underhand toss as you demonstrate tossing the beanbag to a child standing directly opposite you. Ask the child to toss the beanbag back to you.
- Ask children to take turns tossing the bean bags to each other. Stress that they are to use an underhand toss, not an overhand throw.

Teacher Notes:

- *Find a way for each child to be successful. Adjust the distance between the two lines if necessary.*
- *Join in the activity if there are an uneven number of children.*
- *Supervise and redirect children as needed.*

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*
- *Emergent Literacy*
- *Mathematical Thinking*
- *Science and Technology*
- *Social Studies*
- *Creativity and Aesthetics*

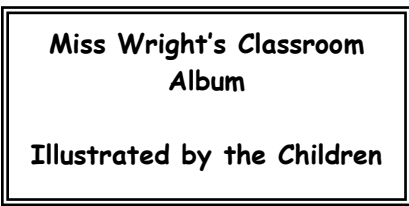
However, there will also be activities included and these will have specific learning goals.

Learning Goals:**PH2.1 Demonstrates fine motor strength, control and coordination** (*hand-eye coordination*)**PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordination to use tools** (*writing and drawing tools*)**SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community** (*learning community*)**CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media** (*exploration of art*)**Art****Activity: Creating a Classroom Quilt**

- Bring a quilt to show the children if you have one.
- Gather children in a group and show the quilt and invite them to tell you what they know about quilts.
- Explain to children that sometimes a group of friends create one section each, then the sections are put together to make a quilt. This is called a friendship quilt.
- Invite each child to make a section of a classroom quilt.
- Provide squares of paper of the same size (8" x 8" for example), and markers, crayons and collage materials such as scraps of lace and ribbon for children to use.
- Suggest that children write their name on their individual square or allow you to write it so people will know who completed each square.
- Arrange the completed sections as quilt squares.
- Turn the sections over and tape together on the back side or lace squares together with yarn.
- Hang the classroom quilt on the wall in the classroom or in the hallway just outside the room.
- Invite families to look at the classroom quilt the children have made.

Activity: Our Classroom Community Picture Album

- Invite each child to draw a self-portrait for the album and put his or her name on the portrait.
- Laminate or cover the pictures with clear self-adhesive for durability.
- Create a cover for the book which includes a title such as **Miss Wright's Classroom Album**. Illustrated by the Children.
- Create a book by tying the pages together with yarn.
- Show the book to the children and invite them to name each child's portrait.
- Place the book in the Library area for children to look at independently.



Activity: Create Picture Postcards

- Provide a collection of picture postcards.
- Discuss with children that when people are on a trip they sometimes buy picture postcards and mail to people.
- Provide 4" x 6" unlined index cards and suggest that children create their own picture postcards. Children may choose to draw on their card or cut pictures from magazines and glue to the card.

Block Center

- Add dump trucks and trucks that might be used for community services such as garbage collection and mail trucks.
- Involve children in making signs for the trucks to designate their function. Examples include: Mail Carrier, Garbage Collection, and Street Repairs

Library/Book Corner

- Add books about communities.
- Add felt/magnetic story figures for the story, *The Kissing Hand*, and felt or magnetic board.
- Add children's individual library cards in a basket and a box where children place their library cards when they select a book.

Learning Goal:

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

Home Living/Dramatic Play

- Add the Library Prop Box.
- Add the Post Office/Mail Carrier Prop Box.
- Add the Barbershop/Hairdresser Prop Box

Teacher Note: *Add the prop box that children seem most interested in exploring. Prop boxes can be added to the center throughout the year. They do not necessarily have to relate to the current Topic of Study.*

Learning Goal:

MT4.1 Explores and describes shapes and spatial relationships (*shape knowledge*)

Manipulatives

Activity: Mail Box Sort

- Cut out several shapes (circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles).
- Make a mailbox for each shape out of shoe boxes or other small boxes.
- Attach a different shape on each box.
- Let the children deliver the mail to the correct boxes.

Sand table or tub

- Place small shovels and dump trucks in the sand table.

Science/Discovery

- Add scales for your children to weigh mail (and boxes you provide) just like they do in the post office.

Learning Goal:

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

Quiet Corner

- 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.

Outdoors

- Hang a trash bag on the fence and encourage children to pick up trash from the playground and put it in the bag.
- Add a gas pump and a few rags in a bucket.

Transition Activities

Learning Goals:

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

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

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

Activity: Mail Call

- Write each child's name on the outside of an envelope. Make the letters large enough so that children can see them in a group setting. Place envelopes in a sack or bag labeled "Mail Bag."
- Take an envelope from the bag and say, "Mail call! Whose letter is this?" Help child recognize his or her name. For example, say, "The name on this letter begins with a D. That's right, Daniel, that's your name."
- Invite first child to select an envelope from the mail bag, hold up the envelope and say, "Mail call! Whose letter is this?" After 2nd child recognizes his or her name, the 1st child transitions to the next activity.
- Continue the activity with all of the children.

Teacher Notes:

- *Use this transition activity at other times during the year.*
- *Consider placing in each envelope a picture that represents a specific learning center and child transitions to that center. For example, if four children are allowed in the block center, put pictures of blocks in four envelopes. Use this type activity only occasionally because children should have the opportunity to choose where they wish to play.*

Activity: Whose Library Card?

- Use the library cards from the basket in the library area.
- Choose a card and invite the child to transition to the next activity.

Family Connection and Engagement

Send home a note to parents stating for the next few days the children will be learning about their classroom community and the community in which they live with their families.

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

- Include the titles and authors of some of the children's books about communities. Suggest that they look for these books in the local library, check them out and read them with their child.
- 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.
- Send home information provided by the local library. Suggest that families visit the library with their child and request a library card if they do not have one.
- Familiarize yourself with the jobs of family members. If appropriate, involve them in classroom activities related to the community.

Tips for Involving Children in Music Activities

Start singing a song or playing a lively CD and children will flock around you and join in. Children sing because they enjoy it. Consider these strategies for engaging children in singing and moving to music.

Activity: Spin the Bottle Songs

- Place familiar song titles on a strip of paper and insert them into a clear plastic bottle. (Make sure the strips can easily come out of the bottle.)
- Invite a child to spin the bottle and pull a song title from the bottle.
- Read the song title to the children and you and the children sing the song together.

Teacher Note: *Introduce new songs by placing a new song title on a strip of paper and drawing it out of the bottle. Sing the song through one time. Invite children to join you as you sing it again. This is much more effective than asking children if they want to learn a new song because they will probably reply “No.”*

Teacher Note: *The Spin the Bottle activity came from Ann Fillitreau, former teacher of three year olds at Rockefeller School in Little Rock.*

Activity: Song Starters

- Have a number of song starter objects in a container: bear, bee, duck, monkey, dog and spiders are examples.
- Invite a child to pull one of the animals from the bag.
- Ask children if they can think of a song about the animal.
- State a title if children are unable to come up with one.
- Begin to sing the song and children will soon join you.

Activity: Playing Rhythm Sticks Together

- Begin with rhythm sticks as a way to introduce rhythm instruments to children.
- Have rhythm sticks stored in a container such as a large can or basket.
- Invite children to hold hands and make a circle, drop hands and take a step back and sit down.
- Pass the container around the circle and invite each child to take two rhythm sticks.
- Ask, “Can you use your rhythm sticks like drum sticks and play the drum?” Demonstrate striking the floor as if playing a drum and invite children to do the same.
- Ask, “Can you play the drum loud?” “Now, can you play the drum soft?”
- Allow children to practice “hard” and “soft” until they begin to understand and put into practice the concept.
- Pass the container around the room and ask children to put the rhythm sticks in it.

Activity: Make Rhythm Instruments

- Rhythm sticks – Use wooden dowel sticks 5/8 inch in diameter. Cut each stick 12 inches long. Sand so there are no splinters.
- Bottle maracas – Place rice or gravel in an empty, clear plastic bottle. Glue lid on for safety.
- Drums – Use empty coffee cans with plastic lid or empty oatmeal boxes.

