

DISCOVERY ZONE: SUMMER

Study Investigation:

Cultivating Creativity

Toddler and Preschool Edition



STUDY EXPLANATION

Cultivating Creativity

Prepare to get creative and revel in all things imaginative! Throughout this study, children will embark on a journey of creativity, exploring painting, sculpting, building, design, music, and theatre as exciting points of interest. Children will explore different mediums as they engage in projects intrinsically powered by their own interests, skills, and styling pursuits. Cultivating creativity will be all about expressing individuality, building self-esteem, and appreciating the processes!





Inquiry Questions:

I wonder how I can learn from nature?

I wonder how nature changes from season to season?

I wonder what all of the components of nature are?

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Activity One

Title of Activity: Self Portrait Collaborative Display

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Engagement/Collaboration/Belonging

Objectives: Children will create self portraits out of collage materials and combine together to create one large collaborative display.

Materials:

- Cardstock squares
- Collage loose parts:
 - Wool, ribbon, pompoms, buttons, googly eyes, pipe cleaners
 - Large items for toddlers
- Drawing materials:
 - Paint, markers, crayons, etc.
- Glue/spreaders
- Hole punch
- String
- Mirrors
- Photos of children (toddlers)

Process:

- Set out materials thoughtfully on a work surface to inspire curiosity and engagement, and invite children in small groups to explore.
- Inform children their challenge will be to create a picture of themselves using the cardstock, markers, and collage loose parts.
- Guide children to use mirrors to focus and identify some of their attributes such as hair colour, skin colour, eye colour, and even freckles!
- Children can start with markers to create an outline of their faces to then develop further.
- Let children know they can have fun with their creations, and showcase their attributes in unique ways.
- Guide children to use collage loose parts to create a 3D image of themselves.
- Guide children to use collage loose parts to frame their photos, such as using ribbon.
- When complete, support children to hole punch each corner of their self portraits.
- Educators can then link all self portraits together to create a unified classroom community display.

Toddler Variations:

- In advance of the day, paste small photo printouts of toddlers on individual cardstock squares.
- Provide toddlers with markers, paint, and chunky loose parts, and invite them to decorate their self portraits in unique ways.
- Link together as above and create a toddler community display.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Classroom Bouquet

Skill(s) Focus: Expression/Collaboration/Engagement/Wellbeing

Objectives: Children will create a flower display showcasing creativity and individualism to incorporate into a group bouquet.

Materials:

- Large vase
- Construction paper
- Tissue paper
- Collage materials:
 - Sequins, pompoms, buttons, nature loose parts
 - Large items for toddlers
- Glue
- Paint
- Painting tools:
 - Brushes, rollers, sponges, etc.
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Dough
- Smocks

Process:

- Explain to children that a bouquet of flowers is a grouping of flowers thoughtfully arranged and usually given as a present.
- Inform children they will make a bouquet for their classroom with each child creating a paper flower to add to a large case.
- Set out materials, pictures of different flowers and a small bouquet in the middle of the table along with the materials for creative inspiration.
- Invite children in small groups to begin the creative process.
- As a first step, guide children to paint their paper in unique colours, patterns and designs that speak to them.
- Once the paint is dry invite children to cut out flower templates according to their own design pursuits.
- Next, invite children to decorate their flower templates by gluing on any of the collage materials for added artistic flair.
- When complete, support children to hole punch their templates, and guide thread pipe cleaners through to act as stems and place into a dough base within the vase.
- Take photos of the final piece and share with families!

Toddlers:

- Prior to the activity, cut out a variety of shapes and sizes of flower templates, guiding toddlers to select one.
- Support toddlers to paint in colours of their choice.
- Chunkier decorative loose parts can be glued on for interested children and as available.
- When complete, hole punch in the bottom of the flowers, and thread with a pipe cleaner to finalize the flower creation!

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Collaborative Footprint Painting

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Community and Collaboration/
Belonging/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will take turns mark making their footprints on a sheet of butcher paper while listening to music.

Materials:

- Whiteboard/marker
- Butcher paper
- Tape
- Paint/brushes
- Shallow pans
- Music player
 - Variety of music tempo selections
- Bucket
- Soapy water
- Cloths

Process:

- Engage children in a discussion about how music makes us feel and how our favourite songs can support us in feeling joyful!
- Invite children to share some of their favourite songs, and document on a whiteboard.
- Tape a large sheet of butcher paper in an open area of the classroom, or outdoor environment and invite children to sit around the edges.
- Invite children in pairs to step into the middle of the butcher paper and sit down.
- Guide each partner to lightly paint the soles of each other's feet.
- When ready, play their favourite music selections and invite them to dance. Educators can also involve the children who are sitting on the side to sing in synchrony with the music.
- When the song is complete, guide children to step off to one side onto a towel, and support them to wash their feet.
- When all children have had the opportunity to dance their footprints, hang to dry and display with a sign, "Our Classroom Dance"!

Toddler Variations:

- Set this activity up in the outdoor learning environment, as all toddlers will be excited to join in and dance together.
- Provide multiple sheets of butcher paper to spread the dancing toddlers out into a more open space, minimizing waiting.
- Educators can support toddlers to paint their feet lightly and invite them to join in on the dancing.
- When complete, help toddlers to wash their feet before returning inside.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Activity One

Title of Activity: Feeling Stones

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Emotional Literacy/Collaboration/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will paint facial expressions and items that make them feel joyful onto stones, and place in a classroom garden.

Materials:

- Basket
- Flat stones (large for toddlers)
- Paint/brushes
- Glue

Process:

- Prior to the activity, invite children on a walk throughout the play yards and centre perimeter to collect a large assortment of flat stones and place in a basket.
 - Educators should carefully select the stones and ensure they have a variety of extra stones to support full engagement with this activity.
- When back at the centre, place the stones in a sudsy sensory table, and invite children to help wash and dry each of them.
- Place stones, paint, and markers on a work surface and invite children in small groups to explore.
- Engage children in a discussion about feelings, and ask them to describe experiences that have made them feel happy, sad, excited, proud, joyful, and angry. Educators can support children to come up with more feelings.
- Invite children to paint facial expressions onto the stones.
- Next, invite children to paint items onto their stones that make them feel joyful.
- Educators may support children with prompts by asking them to describe their favourite things, such as their family members, pets, flowers, toys, and anything else that comes to mind.
- When complete, educators can paint the stones using glue for added durability, and place in a basket in a quiet area.
 - Children can hold these stones as a self regulation tool to support them into feeling better when they are angry or upset.

Toddlers:

- Engage toddlers in a discussion about feelings they can easily identify and resonate with, such as happy, sad, and mad.
- Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It" with the toddlers.
- Place larger stones in a tuff tray or sensory table, and invite toddlers to paint them creatively.
- Place in a garden area outside for toddlers to explore intermittently.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Song Writing

Skill(s) Focus: Expressive and Receptive Language/Creative Expression/Phonological Awareness/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will work together to create their own words for a song to the tune of a familiar song.

Materials:

- Educator and children's voices
- Chart paper
- Instruments
- Dance props:
 - Pompoms, scarves, ribbon wands, etc.

Process:

- Invite children to sing the "ABC song," "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," and "Ba Ba Black Sheep."
- Point out that all the songs are sung to the same tune.
- Explain that children can switch out the words of one song to create a whole new song using the same notes.
- Write out the words to the "ABC's" song on large chart paper to allow children to see the flow and rhythm of words, appreciating print context.
- Talk to the children about what they would like to create a song about.
 - This may take a bit of negotiating and educator guidance..
Remind children there will be more time to create more songs for ideas that may not be used immediately.
- After a topic is decided upon, encourage children to create and sing a line, using their peers for help and inspiration.
- As children bring their song to life, print their song line by line on the chart paper.
- Invite children to support the music with instruments and dance props.
- Create a class song book using different well known tunes.

Toddler Variations:

- Invite toddlers to sing some of their favourite songs with you.
- As they gain confidence in the words, substitute names in the song for the names of the toddlers. Invite toddlers to use instruments and dance props.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Letter Monsters

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Language Development/Joyful Engagement/Critical Thinking

Objectives: Children will create a fun "monster" design based on the first letter of their names.

Materials:

- Construction/cardstock paper
- Markers
- Paint/brushes
- Collage materials:
 - Pompoms, buttons, sequins, stickers
 - Larger items for toddlers as needed
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child safe leaves, grasses, flower petals, twigs
 - Larger items for toddlers as needed
- Glue/spreaders
- Story book "The Colour Monster: A Story about Emotions" by Anna Llenas
- Colour scarves

Process:

- Prior to the activity, prepare a cardstock or construction paper square for each child, detailing the upper case letter of their first name.
- Set out materials thoughtfully on a work surface, and invite children in small groups to create.
- Invite children to look through the letter sets to find their letter.
- Involve them in discussion, supporting them to come up with other words that also share that letter sound.
- Challenge children to draw extensions from their letter base to form a fun monster shape!
- Educators can share their own version and place in the middle of the table as a prompt.
- Invite children to decorate their monster shapes using collage materials, bringing their monsters to life.
- When complete, place the monster creations on a display, titled "Our Monster Mash".

Toddlers:

- Share the story, "The Color Monster" to toddler aged children.
- Provide them with colourful scarves and invite them to dance, taking photos of the dancing "monsters".
- Print out photos of the toddlers and glue onto a display board.
- Invite toddlers to paint or colour around their photos, using the same title as above "Our Monster Mash".

MATH DISCOVERY

Activity One

Title of Activity: Pattern Bracelets

Skill(s) Focus: Pattern Recognition/Fine Motor Skills/Creative Expression/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will design unique patterns showcased within a bracelet.

Materials:

- Collage materials:
 - Colourful beads, buttons, pony beads
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child-safe leaves, flower petals, etc.
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Hole punch
- Bracelet cord
- Pipe cleaners (toddlers)

Process:

- Engage children in a discussion about patterns.
- Invite children to a small circle gathering and showcase what AB and ABC patterns look like using tangible attributes such as hair colour, eye colour, hair length, etc.
- Support children to position themselves according to these unique attributes, grouping them accordingly to showcase specific attributes and repeated patterns.
- Set up materials thoughtfully on a work surface and invite children in small groups to create.
- Guide children to create specific AB or ABC type patterns using the collage materials and natural loose parts to embed within bracelets.
- Encourage children to pull out attributes such as colour, size, texture and shape to sequence into patterns.
- As an added challenge, invite children to create new patterns, guiding them to understand the need to showcase a repetition of materials that have been sequenced into patterns.

Toddler Variations:

- Invite toddlers to create their own bracelets using chunkier beads, paper loops, larger loose parts, and pipe cleaners.
- Ensure distinct colours are showcased within the variety of materials, and guide toddlers to identify them.
- Encourage toddlers to select similar colours to group together.

MATH DISCOVERY

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Creating with Shapes

Skill(s) Focus: Shape Recognition/Creative Expression/Critical Thinking/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will use painter's tape to create shapes on a cardboard surface, paint over them, and then peel the tape off to reveal a shape masterpiece.

Materials:

- Variety of shape objects:
 - Cubes, balls, wheels, blocks, shape pictures, etc.
 - Large items for toddlers
- Painter's tape
- Cardboard boxes/sheets
- Paint/brushes

Process:

- Engage children in a discussion about shapes, and their defining features.
- Invite children to move through their learning environment, identifying different shapes for a more tangible experience.
- Set out materials thoughtfully on a work surface, and invite children in small groups to explore and create.
- Provide children with ample strips of painter's tape, and guide them to apply shape outlines onto a cardboard surface.
 - Children can work together to apply strips onto the different sides of a box, or children can work independently using individual cardboard sheets.
 - Encourage children to develop at least three different shapes onto the surface.
 - Support older children to create more complex shapes such as a hexagon.
- When children are satisfied with their tape designs, invite them to paint over the surface.
- Children can use multiple colours, and paint over their shapes in whatever process they choose.
- When the paint is dry, guide children to pull off the tape to reveal the hidden shapes!
- Multiple boxes can be aligned together to create a "Shape Train". Alternatively, individual cardboard sheets can be displayed together using a title such as 'Creating with Shapes'

Toddler Variations:

- Prepare cardboard surfaces ahead of time with tape applications showcasing simple shape creations such as a square, circle, and triangle.
- Invite toddlers to paint over the surface.
- When dry, support toddlers to pull off the tape, enunciating the vocabulary words carefully and excitedly when the shape is revealed!

MATH DISCOVERY

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Playdough Shape Cakes

Skill(s) Focus: Shape Recognition/Creative Expression/Fine Motor Skills/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will choose a shape for their playdough creation, and playfully and creatively add layers of design.

Materials:

- Basket
- Paper
- Markers
- Playdough
- Cookie cutters
- Sculpting tools
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child-safe leaves, grasses, flowers, shells
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Collage materials:
 - Pompoms, buttons, sequins, jewels
 - Larger items for toddlers

Process:

- Prior to the activity, print out a series of shape names onto individual papers, fold and place in a basket.
- Set the materials above thoughtfully on a work surface, and invite children in small groups to come and explore.
- As a first step, present the basket of shape names to each child, and invite them to randomly pull out a piece of paper.
- Support children to read the names and inform them that shape will be the base they need to create to form their shape cakes.
- Provide each child with a small amount of playdough in different colours and encourage them to form their assigned shape.
- Support children to remember the defining attributes of their shape.
- Next, invite children to add in the collage and natural loose parts as a design layer, extending their creative experience.
- Consider extending the activity to become a dramatic play bakery!

Toddler Variations:

- Use larger and easily manageable pieces of playdough for toddlers.
- Simplify the activity by focusing on basic shapes and free-form molding.
- Engage toddlers in hands-on exploration, allowing them to feel and manipulate the playdough.

STEM DISCOVERY

Activity One

Title of Activity: Fizzing Fun

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Critical Thinking/Science Processes/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will participate in a science experiment whereby they will explore the effects of combining baking soda and vinegar and turning the results into a creative display.

Materials:

- Baking soda
- Water
- Vinegar
- Measuring cups
- Spoons
- Food colouring/paint
- Ice cube tray
- Cookie trays/graters (toddlers)
- Squirt bottle
- Pitcher
- Cardstock paper/butcher paper

Process:

- On the day prior to the activity, mix baking soda and water together in equal parts in a measuring pitcher.
- Pour the mixture into an ice cube tray, ensuring the baking soda is diluted into the water and has not settled to the bottom of the pitcher.
- Add drops of food colouring or paint into each ice cube section and stir gently. Place in the freezer overnight.
- Next prepare squirt bottles with one half water and one half vinegar, being sure to label the bottles.
- During outdoor play time, bring the ice cube trays outside and place in a tuff tray, inviting children in small groups to come and explore.
- Clearly define the safety parameters of the activity, informing children they can only use the squirt bottles at the tuff tray activity and must keep it pointing down at the ice cubes.
- Provide children with squirt bottles and encourage them to squeeze, maintaining close supervision.
- Engage children in a discussion about reasons for the fizzy action when vinegar and baking soda are combined.
 - Explain that vinegar is an acid and baking soda is a base, and when they mix, they form a bubbling gas called carbon dioxide.
- Create art from the beautiful fizzy fun mess by placing a piece of cardstock under the ice cubes as they melt and fizz to create a unique and special masterpiece.

Toddler Variations:

- Freeze ice sheets for toddlers and create shavings using a grater.
- Lay butcher paper over the bottom of a tuff tray or sensory table for toddlers and add the shavings.
- Invite toddlers to use spray bottles or small containers of water, to aim at the ice cubes while narrating the process, exploring the fizzing sights and sounds.

STEM DISCOVERY

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Ball and Water Races

Skill(s) Focus: Collaboration/Persistence/Imagination and Creativity/Problem Solving/Critical Thinking

Objectives: Children will work together to create ball run waterways and race against their peers.

Materials:

- Fence or lattice backing
- Pool noodles
- Optional extensions:
 - Plastic tubes, rain gutters, PVC pipes, etc.
- Zip ties
- Funnels
- Recyclable containers
- Buckets
- Ample water source
- Small ball
- Timer
- Outdoor blocks (toddlers)
- Wide gutters (toddlers)
- Larger ball (toddlers)
- Shallow tray (toddlers)

Process:

- Support children to form partners or small groups to work together to champion this ball raceway competition.
- Provide children with an assortment of pool noodles and zip ties, challenging them to build a ball run along a portion of a fencing or lattice panel.
 - Provide alternative materials to complement the pool noodles, such as gutters, tubes, or pipes, as available.
- Define the boundaries for children to engineer each of their ball runs.
- Let children know their goal will be to create the fastest run, with at least one engineering challenge that must be incorporated. Consider the following suggestions:
 - The ball must zig and then zag at least once in the runway.
 - The ball must move through a tunnel.
 - The ball must travel down a ramp built into the run.
 - Create the conditions that meet the developmental needs of the children in your group.
- Guide children to place a bucket at the bottom of the run to catch the small ball.
- When the construction is complete, challenge children to position the small ball at the start of the raceway, and support its movement by pouring water. Children will need to work in close succession with their group members to keep the water momentum going!
- The first group to have their ball splash into the bucket will win! Use timers if limited space for more than one ball run construction.

Toddler Variations:

- Set up an outdoor runway and ramp for toddlers using outdoor blocks or wide gutters.
- Guide toddlers to use a larger ball to roll down the runway and ramp and into a shallow tray of water.

STEM DISCOVERY

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Music Makers

Skill(s) Focus: Problem Solving/Imagination and Creativity /Expression/Engagement

Objectives: Children will work together to form their own band, engineering and styling their own instruments by sourcing assorted loose and recyclable parts.

Materials:

- Photos or tangible samples of instruments
- Bases for instruments:
 - Assorted cardboard boxes (allergy aware if from food)
 - Assorted tin cans
 - Assorted plastic containers
 - Assorted jars
- Assorted flexible STEM materials:
 - String, elastics, mason jar rings, lids, piping, paper towel tubes
 - Larger for toddlers
- Assorted collage style loose parts:
 - Ribbons, beads, bells, sequins
 - Larger for toddlers
- Assorted nature loose parts:
 - Child safe sticks, twigs, pebbles, shells, etc.
 - Larger for toddlers
- Tools:
 - Hole punchers, scissors, hot glue gun (educators)
- Tape/glue

Process:

- Organize children into small groups.
- Guide children in a discussion about the types of instruments they observe or hear in their favourite music.
- Play some examples, and identify instruments with strings, horns, drums, and keyboard style instruments.
- Provide photos of instruments, or source out samples from colleagues.
- Challenge them to create at least three different instruments that can be used to play alongside a favourite song.
- Children do not have to make exact replicas of instruments, and can be creative to design an entirely new instrument.
- Guide each group to come up with a band name.
- When complete, invite each group to perform their own concert.
- This activity sets the stage for a Fun, Fabulous Event, with the possibility of developing into a bigger concert with children from other programs, and family members coming to view!
 - Consider posters, formal invitations, concert tickets, and seating arrangements!

Toddler Variations:

- Bring in authentic instruments for toddlers to explore. Use families as resources for any donations, or borrowed items.
- Provide toddlers with decorative tape or stickers, and invite them to decorate plastic containers or coffee cans for drum bases.
- Provide toddlers with spoons, or chunky dowels to use as drum sticks.
- Educators could also support toddlers to make sound shakers with smaller containers.
- Add in music and some dance props, and involve toddlers in a concert!

PHYSICAL LITERACY

Activity One

Title of Activity: Colourful Balance Path

Skill(s) Focus: Physical Well-being/Fundamental Movements Skills of Balance and Coordination/Colour Recognition/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will explore balance and coordination by engaging in creative movements along a colour pathway.

Materials:

- Cones
- Construction paper
- Coloured tape
- Cushions/yoga mats
- Coloured balls/bean bags

Process:

- Prior to the activity, create a series of colour markers by using cones and securing coloured tags to them.
- Create a pathway on the floor using these cones and directional arrow shapes made from tape, or a formal series of balance beams.
- Place cushions or mats along the pathway at various points.
- Explain to the children that they will be navigating the Colourful Balance Path.
- Children must stay on the taped markings or balance beam, balancing carefully and walking with focused steps.
- To start the activity, educators call out a colour, and the children must balance along the path, and land on that specific colour closest to them.
- Incorporate changes in movement and additional challenges, such as:
 - Hopping on one foot.
 - Carrying a coloured ball while navigating.
 - Balancing a bean bag on one's head.
 - Be creative!
- When children misstep off of the taped pathway or balance beam, they need to take a rest at the cushion or mat before proceeding.
- Discuss the colours, movements, and challenges at the end of the activity.

Toddler Variations:

- Use larger and fewer coloured markers to simplify the pathway for toddlers.
- Allow toddlers to hold an adult's hand or use supportive equipment while balancing.
- Engage toddlers by incorporating plush toys or soft balls of matching colours.

PHYSICAL LITERACY

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Weather Movements

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Physical Well-being/Critical Thinking/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will be challenged to creatively act out different movement words related weather.

Materials:

- Cardstock squares
- Basket
- Movement props:
 - Hula hoops, scarves, ribbons
- Music player
- Weather sounds
- Open space

Process:

- Prior to the activity, print out a set of words related to weather movements on cardstock squares and place in a basket. Consider the following:
 - Breezy
 - Windy
 - Raining
 - Sprinkling
 - Thundering
 - Lightning
 - Storming
 - Crashing
 - Swirling
 - Spinning
 - Snowing
 - Sunshining
- Use Buzz and invite children to join in for a game in an open space.
- Start by asking children to describe different types of weather, and to imagine how they would move in those types of events.
- Pull out a card and recite the weather descriptor, and invite children to simply move as creative as they desire, mimicking the weather.
- Invite children to use scarves, ribbons, and hula hoops to support them in their movements for more dramatic effect.

Toddler Variations:

- Play recordings of weather for toddlers, and encourage them to move their bodies according to how the sounds make them feel.

PHYSICAL LITERACY

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Painting Fun with Corn Starch

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Joyful Engagement /Movement/ Wellbeing

Objectives: Children will create artistic designs using corn starch paint and large body movements.

Materials:

- Corn starch paint:
 - 3 cups corn starch
 - 2-4 dashes food colouring
 - 3 cups water
- 4-6 plastic bowls, or a 6-cup muffin pan
- Large paint brushes
- Food colouring
- Masking tape
- Water source
- Buckets
- Sponges

Process:

- Invite children to participate in each step of the creation of the corn starch paint.
 - This recipe can be made with smaller ingredient amounts, maintaining equal parts of corn starch and water.
 - Using a large mixing bowl, add the water to the cornstarch and mix well until clumps are gone.
 - Divide equal amounts into separate bowls, adding a few drops of food coloring to each bowl to create your colours and mix well.
 - Remind children to stir the corn starch intermittently to help keep the colours vibrant.
- Guide children to use broad, big strokes as they are painting, inviting them to paint fence panels, walls, and even sidewalks!
- Introduce music into the creative process to engage children further.
- As engagement with the activity starts to wane, inform children they will need to wash all that paint off!
- Turn on the hose, bring out the buckets and sponges, and invite children to get wet, have fun, and remove the paint!

Toddler Variations:

- Provide toddlers with chunkier paintbrushes to explore the cornstarch paint.
- Place poster boards on the ground or fence panels for toddlers to paint on.

CREATIVE DISCOVERY

Activity One

Title of Activity: Suncatcher Display

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Critical Thinking/Exploration/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will create a suncatcher display using contact paper and a variety of colourful materials.

Materials:

- Contact paper
- Tissue paper
- Reflective loose parts:
 - Metallic wrapping paper, sequins, ribbon, etc.
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child-safe leaves, flower petals, twigs, etc.
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Small branches
- Hole punch
- String

Process:

- Present an authentic suncatcher for the children to see how it illuminates the colours and patterns of the sunlight traveling through it.
- Prior to the activity cut out a variety of tissue paper squares and reflective loose parts for children to use in their design process.
- Set out materials thoughtfully on a work surface, and invite children in small groups to explore and create.
- Provide children with a sheet of contact paper, sticky side up.
- Invite children to create patterns and designs on their sheets using the tissue paper squares and metallic loose parts.
- Invite children to add in natural loose parts in spaces throughout their contact paper.
- Invite children to hang ribbon lengths along the bottom of their suncatcher display for added appeal.
- When children are content with their design, provide another sheet of contact paper to lay over top.
- Children may choose to cut off any excess margins of their contact paper or cut it into a specific shape.
- Support children to hole punch a space in the top to thread string through and hang near a window or outside.
- Educators may wish to hang several suncatchers from a stick or branch for a more natural feel.

Toddler Variations:

- Provide toddlers with chunkier loose parts to apply to their sticky suncatcher bases.
- Place a larger sheet of contact paper on an easel, or window and invite toddlers to work together to add items onto a group suncatcher.
- When complete, hang for all to see!

CREATIVE DISCOVERY

Activity Two

Title of Activity: Puppet Theatre

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Critical Thinking/Collaboration/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: The children will design their own puppets and work collaboratively on a puppet show.

Materials:

- Puppet bases:
 - Socks, paper bags, craft sticks, towel tubes, fabric scraps
- Collage materials:
 - Wool, ribbon, pompoms, buttons, googly eyes, etc.
 - Larger items for toddlers
- Drawing materials:
 - Paint, markers, crayons, etc.
- Fabric paint/brushes
- Glue
- Scissors
- Child safe sewing supplies (optional)
- Puppet theatre:
 - Large box
 - Platform/dowel rods/fabric

Process:

- Prior to the activity, educators can ask families to bring in old socks for the children to use as their bases, or purchase a set for the program. Keep in mind, there are multiple options for bases.
- Prior to the activity set up a puppet theatre. If one is not accessible within the centre, educators may create one out of a box, or create a platform using dowel rods and fabric for the curtains.
- Use Buzz and classroom puppets to inform the children excitedly of their next creative pursuit!
- Set out materials thoughtfully on a work surface and invite children to explore and create.
- Guide children to select their base, and begin the design process.
 - Children can also make a variety of puppets, including stick and finger puppets.
 - Children may need closer support and guidance if using fabric scraps to create puppets, especially if sewing is required.
- Guide children to explore the loose parts, and add details such as facial features, hair, and clothes to their puppets.
- When complete and dry, support children to form small groups or partners and begin the creative process of planning a puppet show.
- Support children to think of their favourite book, song, or movie to help yield ideas for their performance.
- Be sure to take photos of the performances for families to view!

Toddler Variations:

- Support toddlers to decorate paper templates or paper bags for their puppet creations using chunkier loose parts.
- Invite toddlers to use their puppets to sing their favourite songs and nursery rhymes.

CREATIVE DISCOVERY

Activity Three

Title of Activity: Flags about Me

Skill(s) Focus: Creative Expression/Critical Thinking/Appreciation of Nature/Joyful Engagement

Objectives: Children will create their own flags, and learn about wind direction.

Materials:

- Large colourful paper
- Ribbons or streamers
- Drawing materials:
 - Paint, markers, crayons
- Stickers
 - Larger for toddlers
- Decorative tape
- String or yarn
- Hole punch
- Tape/glue

Process:

- Engage children in a discussion about the attributes that make them special.
- Ask children about what they love, their favourite things, and what they feel their strengths are.
 - Educators should be ready to add in supportive comments and specific attributes to add to the list.
- Inform children they will be creating their own flags, showcasing who they are.
- Provide each child with a large sheet of paper.
- Encourage them to decorate the sheet by first drawing a picture of themselves using paint, markers, or crayons.
 - Children can feature a picture of themselves engaged in a favourite activity!
- Guide children to include their name on the flag.
- Invite children to add in details using the stickers or decorative tape.
- Invite children to then cut the decorated sheet into strips, leaving the top uncut.
- Attach ribbons or streamers to the bottom of the sheet along each of the strips.
- Punch holes near the top of the sheet and string yarn through them.
- Hang the flags in an open area and observe how they move in the wind.
- Discuss the direction of the wind and how the windsocks respond.

Toddler Variations:

- Guide toddlers to paint free designs onto their paper.
- Provide toddlers with larger stickers and decorative tape chunks to add to their paper.
- Support toddlers in cutting or tearing their paper into strips and attaching ribbon onto the bottom.
- Engage toddlers in observing and narrating the movement of their flags.

Educator Reflections: *optional*

I wonder if I successfully observed, listened and allowed the interests of the children to lead further investigations?

I wonder how I could improve upon my teaching practices in the future?

I wonder what support I may need to better foster child inquiry in my learning environment?

I wonder what went well, and what could be improved upon regarding child-led learning?

Investigation Materials

Building Connections

- Cardstock squares
- Collage loose parts:
 - Wool, ribbon, pompoms, buttons, googly eyes, pipe cleaners, sequins, (larger for toddlers)
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child safe leaves, petals, twigs, (larger for toddlers)
- Drawing materials:
 - Paint, markers, crayons, etc.
- Glue/spreaders
- Hole punch
- String
- Mirrors
- Photos of children
- Large vase
- Construction paper
- Tissue paper
- Glue
- Painting tools:
 - Brushes, rollers, sponges, etc.
- Scissors
- Dough
- Smocks
- Whiteboard/marker
- Butcher paper
- Tape
- Paint/brushes
- Shallow pans
- Music player
 - Variety of music tempo selections
- Bucket
- Soapy water
- Cloths

Language and Literacy

- Basket
- Flat stones (larger for toddlers)
- Paint/brushes
- Glue/spreaders
- Chart paper
- Instruments
- Dance props:
 - Pompoms, scarves, ribbon wands, etc.
- Construction paper/cardstock
- Markers
- Collage materials:
 - Pompoms, buttons, sequins, stickers (larger for toddlers)
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child safe leaves, grasses, flower petals, twigs, (larger for toddlers)

Language and Literacy Continued

- Story book: "The Colour Monster: A Story About Emotions" by Anna Llenas
- Colour scarves

Math Discovery

- Collage materials:
 - Colourful beads, buttons, pony beads, (larger for toddlers)
- Natural loose parts:
 - Child safe leaves, flower petals, (larger for toddlers)
- Hole punch
- Bracelet cord
- Pipe cleaners
- Variety of shape objects:
 - Cubes, balls, wheels, blocks, shape pictures, etc.
- Painter's tape
- Cardboard boxes/sheets
- Paint/brushes
- Basket
- Paper
- Markers
- Playdough
- Cookie cutters
- Sculpting tools

STEM Discovery

- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Measuring cups
- Pitcher
- Spoons
- Food colouring/paint
- Ice cube tray/shallow pan (toddlers)
- Squeeze bottle
- Cardstock paper/butcher paper
- Fence or lattice backing
- Pool noodles
- Optional extensions:
 - Plastic tubes, rain gutters, PVC pipe, etc.
- Zip ties
- Funnels
- Recyclable containers
- Buckets
- Small ball
- Large ball (toddlers)
- Outdoor blocks (toddlers)
- Shallow tray (toddlers)
- Water source

Investigation Materials

Stem Discovery Continued

- Photos or samples of tangible instruments
- Bases for instruments:
 - Cardboard boxes, tin cans, plastic containers, jars
- Flexible STEM materials:
 - String, elastics, mason jar rings, lids, tubes, piping, paper towel tubes, (larger for toddlers)
- Collage loose parts:
 - Ribbons, beads, bells, sequins, (larger for toddlers)
- Natural loose parts:
 - Sticks, twigs, pebbles, shells, (larger for toddlers)
- Tools:
 - Hole punchers, staplers, scissors, hot glue guns, etc.
- Tape
- Glue

Physical Literacy

- Cones
- Construction paper
- Coloured tape
- Cushions/yoga mats
- Coloured balls/bean bags
- Cardstock squares
- Basket
- Movement props:
 - Hula hoops, scarves, ribbons
- Music player
- Weather sounds
- Cornstarch
- Food colouring
- Water
- Plastic bowls
- Muffin tins
- Large paint brushes
- Masking tape
- Buckets
- Sponges

Creative Discovery

- Contact paper
- Tissue paper
- Reflective loose parts:
 - Metallic wrapping paper, sequins, ribbon pieces, (larger for toddlers)
- Natural loose parts:
 - Leaves, flower petals, twigs, (larger for toddlers)

Creative Discovery Continued

- Small branches
- Hole punch
- String
- Puppet bases:
 - Socks, paper bags, craft sticks, towel tubes, fabric scraps
- Collage materials:
 - Wool, ribbon, pompoms, buttons, googly eyes, (larger for toddlers)
- Drawing materials:
 - Paint, markers, crayons, etc.
- Fabric paint
- Paint brushes
- Glue
- Scissors
- Child safe sewing supplies (optional)
- Puppet theatre stand:
 - Large box
 - Platform/dowel/fabric
- Large colourful paper
- Ribbons or streamers
- Stickers
- Decorative tape
- Hole punch
- Tape/glue