

Creative Centers for Indoor and Outdoor Learning

Susan MacHugh
The Singing Bag Solution
TECPDS#1040
Kingwood, Texas
281-812-3182
MrsQ123@aol.com

The Importance of Learning Centers

***Creating opportunities for age appropriate concrete experiences necessary for brain development.**

- **Encourage language interaction**

- *Dramatic play involvement**

- *Physical development**

- *Develop listening skills**

- *Provide opportunities for making choices**

- *Logical thinking**

- *Vision skills**

- *Gives children the opportunity to feel successful as they play.**

- *Creating STEM project opportunities**

- *Creative art development**

- *Music and movement interaction**

Indoor Activity Centers

Play Dough Center

Creative Arts Center

Easel Art

Literacy Center

Duplo Story Creations

Water Table ABC Center

Post Office

Story Tree

Snack Time

Engineering / Architecture Corner

Apartment Activities

Balance Math Center

Faith Development

Music & Movement

Dress Up Center

Cozy Corner

Manipulatives

Outdoor Activity Centers

Fishing Pond

Hammering

Tweezer Trek

Funnels/Basters

Playground Pet

Fence Spray Painting

Cutting with Scissors/Tickets

Hollow Block Playground Play

Rakes/Brooms/Shovels

Story Quilt/Puppets

Sand Volcanoes

The Garden

Art Clay Center

Motor Skills Activity Center

Bikes/Scooters/Helmets

Sand/Water Play

The Playground Tree

Volcano Fun

Large baby food glass container
Baking Soda
White vinegar
Tablespoon measuring spoon
Red food coloring
Eyedropper
Plastic 1 cup measuring cup
Tray with raised edge to contain liquid
Green cooked play dough
Inch round stones for decoration

Have the children cover the outside area of the baby food jar with green play dough and stones, giving the look of a grass covered hill leading to the mouth of the volcano. The children will then measure 1 tablespoon of baking soda and dump it inside of the container. Next the children, using the eyedropper, will add 5 or 6 drops of red food coloring.

Invite conversation by asking the children what they think will happen when they pour the vinegar into the container. They will surprise you with their predictions.

Now the volcano is ready to erupt. Using the measuring cup filled with white vinegar, have the children slowly pour some of the white vinegar into the container. Quickly the volcano will erupt with pinkish lava that will flow over the sides of the volcano. Repeat the process again by pouring some more of the vinegar into the container. This is a win/win activity for all ages.

Ladybugs

Steps for Releasing Ladybugs in the Garden:

*Purchase ladybugs from a local nursery, garden center, or mail-order firm.

*Spray a few drops of water on the bag of ladybugs and place them in the vegetable crisper in your refrigerator as soon as you get them. The cold will not harm them. Their movement becomes slow.

*Go outside and water your garden well.

*Release the ladybugs into your garden after the sunsets. This will prevent the hungry birds from eating them before the ladybugs begin to eat the aphids.

It is fun to share these ladybugs. Use a baggie or plastic bug container for travel home with each child. Attach a note for the parents with the steps for releasing the ladybugs in their gardens.

Earth Worms

Read books about worms and how they live.

Hunt for worms in the garden so the children can handle them.

Examine the worms under a magnifier.

Nature Equipment

Bug House
Magnifiers
Small aquarium with a screened lid
Rye grass seeds
Empty milk jug container
Child sized goggles
Large plastic container for water/sand/clay
activities
Sunscreen lotion
Hats and caps

Bubbles

$\frac{1}{4}$ Cup Dawn or Joy
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

1 Tablespoon Corn syrup

*Experiment using common household items such as colanders, screens unused fly swatters, slotted spatulas, and spoons, large holed buttons and others.

*Count the bubbles you see in the air.

*Make predictions about the size of the bubbles and shape

References and Resources

Discount School Supply - 800-627-2828

Lakeshore Learning Materials - www.lakeshorelearning.com or
800-421-5354

Insect Lore - www.insectlore.com 1-800-Livebug