

Friday Tip: October 2, 2009

Hands-on Ideas

Lisa Murphy was great, again, at the workshop on Saturday. Her sessions covered the importance of play, multiple intelligences, and early childhood theorists as well as 2 mini-sessions on art and science activities. For those of you who couldn't be there, here are two popular recipes and a few easy science experiments she shared. If you'd like a copy of the handout from the workshop, we'd be happy to get one to you.

Flubber

1. Mix 2 cups water and 1 ½ cups Elmer's glue in a big bowl.
2. Add a squirt of liquid water color and stir.
3. In a separate bowl, mix 2 cups water and 4 tbs Borax. Dissolve completely.
4. Gradually add small amounts Borax mixture to glue mixture, stirring after each addition of Borax solution. As you mix, it will become a flubber ball. You may not need all of the Borax mixture so add slowly and stir frequently. Store flubber in airtight container or bag for a few weeks. When it gets hard or flaky, it's time for a new batch. Note: Vinegar removes flubber from clothes, carpet and fabric. Mayo takes it out of hair.

Ooblick

Lisa Murphy recommends equal parts cornstarch and water. I've also seen it done with 2:1 ratio of cornstarch: water. For a science experiment, try both with the kids and see what happens. This is great sensory table mixture, but it stinks if it's covered up.

Baking soda and vinegar are classic science experiments for kids because they're safe and fun. Here are a couple ideas from the workshop:

Bubbling Eruption

In a pitcher, mix ½ cup dish soap, 1 cup water, ¼ cup vinegar and squirt of liquid watercolor. In a clear bottle, put ½ cup baking soda. Using a funnel, slowly pour vinegar mixture into baking soda bottle and watch what happens. Also try this without the dish soap—let the kids see what happens.

Balloon blow-up

Put 1 tsp. baking soda inside a balloon. Pour ¼ cup vinegar into a 10 oz bottle. Attach the balloon to the bottle and let the baking soda fall into the balloon.

Pie Pan Volcanos

Put a layer of baking soda in a pie pan or other baking pan and vinegar in a cup or bowl. Provide small droppers or turkey basters for the children to drop vinegar into the soda. Fine motor and science in one!

A key to doing science with children is to have enough materials available and prepped to do the experiment multiple times. Children need to see it enough to begin to be curious about what's happening. If the experiment requires a teacher's presence, organize enough materials for MANY repeats ahead of time and make sure you'll have enough staff and/or activities to cover the rest of the room while you do the experiment with children who are interested.

Have a great week!

Amelia