

WORKING CREATIVELY WITH CHILDREN AT HOME

Bright Start Family Academy Initiative
Early Arts Project



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

This activity sheet will provide parents with two practical playful art experiences that you can easily do at home with your children using found objects, such as kitchen utensils and used cardboard boxes.

These activities will support you and your child in these interesting times when many parents are spending more time at home with their families. This is a great time to work on a shared creative experience with your child. It will provide some discussion points about why creativity is important for young children's development and look at a range of art materials and see what is best to get the most creative responses from your child.

Also an exciting project will be introduced that over the next few weeks that you and your child might like to be involved in. It's called **The Voices of Children** project. This unique international photographic project is a great way, while being at home to share your children's creative responses and explore the concept of identity.

Professor Ian Brown, UOW.

How we can be creative in the home using easily found objects...

Activity One Printing Using Kitchen Objects



What you will need:

- Any objects you can find in the kitchen drawer that are not sharp, that can be washed later and safe to use (potato mashers, forks, cookie cutters,)
- Acrylic paints (washable, non toxic tempera paints)
- Reasonable quality paper (drawing pads, litho paper, art paper)
- Dish washing sponges
- Plastic food containers

What skills will it develop:

- This activity helps children with sensory play. Children love to use their senses whether it is to touch, feel, smell or hear. It encourages the development of fine motor skills, which allows children to move, and co-ordinate muscles in fingers through touch.
- It teaches children about patterns, shapes and overlapping shapes.
- Some colour mixing can be incorporated.

Method:

1. Cut dish washing sponges to fit inside plastic containers which will become the printing pads. Slightly wet the sponges and pour out different coloured paints onto each sponge.
2. Have the children dip the kitchen utensil into the paint (try to keep it upright) and print onto the paper. Press firmly.
3. Change colours...overlap the shapes or form patterns from the printed shape.

Communicate with your child:

It is important to discuss, question and talk to your child before, during and after the creative experience. Some communication starters could be:

- Let's make some patterns (remember patterns are shapes that repeat or overlap)
- What shapes can you see? (Circles, squares, rectangles, triangles)
- Let's count the shapes...One shape... two shapes... three shapes...
- Which shapes overlap? Can you see anything in the shapes? Is it an animal? A house...
- What's your favourite colour?

How we can be creative in the home using easily found objects...

Activity Two Constructing Kingdoms with Cardboard Boxes and Tubes



What you will need:

- Small cardboard boxes
- Cardboard tubes from plastic wrap, foil etc
- Masking tape, packaging tape
- Paint if desired
- Scissors for adults

What skills will it develop:

- This activity will allow children to manipulate and play with larger objects. Deciding what can be constructed it.. involves problem solving and fine motor skills. There is a lot of decision making, play and provides opportunities for the children to explore throughtrial and error.

Method:

1. Gather together lots and lots of small boxes, cardboard tubes and pieces of cardboard.
2. Demonstrate for your child how you can construct and fix pieces together to form different constructed forms.
3. Use sticky tape or masking tape to affix the boxes and tubes together. Alternatively, it is possible for adults to cut slits in the cardboard so that children can construct by putting together forms through slit construction (see video).
4. Try constructing the tallest, widest, longest form.
5. If children are really excited and want paint the constructed forms use acrylic paints to make them bright and colourful.

Communicate with your child:

It is important to discuss, question and talk to your child before, during and after the creative experience. Some communication starters could be:

- How can we join these two boxes together?
- What does this construction remind you of? An aeroplane? A house? A castle? A mosque?
- How can we make it higher? Longer? Wider?
- Does it stand on it's own? Can we make it rock?
- If we put a light behind what sort of shadow does it produce? (Can we draw that shadow?)

Some resources you might like to have a look at...

Printing with household items

LINK to the videos below to support you on printing and construction:

<https://youtu.be/dMjXpCkca-k>

Interesting blogs/articles for parents about printing and construction with young children.

Masher Prints

<http://www.childcentralstation.com/2011/05/masher-print-painting.html>

Cardboard Tubes and Boxes

<http://www.childcentralstation.com/2010/09/what-would-you-do-with-it-wednesday-4.html>

<https://theimaginationtree.com/toddler-activity-shape-printing-cardboard-tubes/>

<https://theimaginationtree.com/25-creative-ways-use-cardboard-box/>

Quarantine activities for toddlers

<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2020/03/quarantine-activities-for-toddlers.html>

The following video from a

Dr Gai Lindsay from the University of Wollongong Australia provides some insight into developing creativity with young children...

<https://www.facebook.com/UOWEarlyStartDiscoverySpace/videos/1086790908366942/>

