

Theme: School Days

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

- Sidewalk chalk – draw a grid and play hopscotch outside on the sidewalk or driveway in connection with your art activity.
- If school hasn't started yet, visit a local school playground to play on the equipment there. If unavailable, go to a local park.
- Spoon relay: apples.
- Instead of bean bag toss, toss the eraser!
- For another twist on "duck, duck, goose", try pencil-pencil-eraser, or scissors-scissors-paper!
- Crossing Guard: Let children take turns being the crossing guard in the yard and directing tricycle traffic!

Math Activities:

- Count the apples
- Likenesses and differences: What's different about this apple?
- Dominoes
- Match game: Match the number of spots on the apple to the number.
- Let children draw their numbers on a small chalkboard with chalk; provide an eraser.
- How many pencils will this jar hold? Let children put pencils (or crayons) into a jar and count them as they do.

Science Activities:

- Sink or float – real apple, plastic apple, wood apple...
- Examine leaves from the schoolyard under a magnifying glass
- Sand table: Put in a cardboard schoolhouse, some toy cars, school bus, figures of children, street signs, etc.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- Flannel board story created from one of your reading books for the week. Let children "tell" the flannel board story.
- Any counting/sorting game you have on hand.
- Lacing activities – create a few little-red-schoolhouse cardboard cutouts and let children lace them with shoe strings.
- Blocks, Legos
- Scissors and paper- practice cutting strips and make a paper chain to decorate the room. Children can write their names on some of the strips.

Snacks:

- School Bus Cakes: cover a twinkie with yellow frosting and use gummy lifesaver candies to make the wheels on the bus. You can sing "The Wheels on the Bus" as you make the cakes. Serve with fruit and milk. (I found this one on <http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/back-to-school.htm>)
- Serve lunch brown-bag style! Sandwiches, apples, and cartons of juice or milk.

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Put up the alphabet strips around the room showing a printed alphabet. You can go over these with the children at circle time. Also put up shapes, numbers, and paper apples with the name of each child on an apple. Decorate the room to look like a classroom. Invite a kindergarten teacher to visit—or visit a school.

Songs & Fingerplays:

See <http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/preschoolsongs.html>
"Who came to school today? Jane. Jane. Who came to school today? Jane came."
"This is the way we" get ready for school, shine our shoes, stack our books, comb our hair...

Books:

The Berenstain Bears Catch the Bus by Stan & Jan Berenstain
The Night Before Kindergarten by N. Wing
Max and Ruby Play School by R. Wells
Clifford's First School Day by N. Bridwell
Curious George's First Day of School, by H. A. Rey
First Day Jitters, by J. Danneberg & J. D. Love
Mouse's First Day of School, by L. Thompson & B. Erdogan
On My Very First Day of School I Met... by N. Stiles
Amelia Bedelia's First Day of School by H. Parish & L. Avril
Miss Mingo and the First Day of School, by J. Harper

My First Day of School, by P. K. Hallinan
The Night Before First Grade, by N. Wing
My First Day of Preschool, by J. Fontes
What to Expect at Preschool, by H. Murkoff
I Love You All Day Long by, F. Rusackas
My First Day at Nursery School, by B. Edwards
Vera's First Day of School, by V. Rosenberry
Kindergarten Rocks! by K. Davis
Off to Kindergarten, by T. Johnston
Countdown to Kindergarten, by A. McGhee

Dramatic Play:

School books

Desk(s)

School supplies:

pencils, notebooks

coloring books,

crayons

rulers

Apples for the teacher

Art:

- Plain white paper and crayons: Draw a picture of your local school.
- Fingerpaint – red and green; paint on paper cut into a large apple shape.
- Spatter paint – flick thin liquid tempera onto a coffee filter and watch for the starburst pattern!
- Easel paint – suggest children paint a picture of what they like best about coming to your child care program
- Sidewalk chalk – draw whatever comes to mind as they decorate the sidewalk or driveway

Circle Time Activities:

- Have children wear nametags with their first names printed on them. Sing a welcome song, such as “Who Came to School Today” or “Look Who Came to School Today.” As the child’s name is mentioned, he gets to stand up and take a bow!
- Talk about class rules that we will follow when we go to school. Let a puppet do the talking!
- Invite a crossing guard to come talk to the children about safety rules at school.
- What to do when.... Talk about what to do when you need help at school, someone bothers you, you need a pencil, it’s time for lunch, it’s time for class....
- Invite a local kindergarten teacher to come talk to the children (prior to school starting, of course) or take the children on a field trip to visit a local kindergarten class. Describe a typical day at kindergarten. You might also want to display pictures of a local kindergarten classroom (minus the children) so children can see the different areas/centers.
- Practice saying/singing the letters of the alphabet. Have a sheet of paper/construction paper with each letter of the alphabet printed on it—both upper and lower case—and let the children work together to get the letters in alphabetical order.
- Have a “show-and-tell” day.
- Let children show off their art activities from the morning: Here’s a cute rhyme to go with it:
*What I made today
Was something made by me (point to self)
Now I place it on the floor
For everyone to see. (display what was made)*
- Tell about your first day at school. What was it like? What was your teacher like? What activities did you do? How exciting was it to learn new things??? What games did you play at recess?
- Create a “school house” out of a cardboard box. Inside the box, place paper apples with the names of familiar songs (one per apple). Let children take turns pulling out an apple; the group sings the song listed on the apple.
- Discuss the letter “S” for “school”. What other letters are in the word “school”? What sounds do they make?
- Go over the weather, the days of the week, the alphabet song, etc.