

Theme:

SPACE

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

Create a simple astronaut obstacle course.

Astronaut exercises:

- Solar System Stretch--Reach to the sky; then stretch arms out wide.
- Rocket Ship Run-in-Place
- Galactic Gallop
- Lunar Leaps
- Trainee Toe Touches
- Planet Push-ups (name a planet for each of 9 push-ups!)
- Constellation Cool-down--Lie down on your back. Relax as you imagine staring up at a starry sky.

We're Going to the Moon

Zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon
Zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon
If you'd like to take a trip
Climb aboard my rocket ship
Zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon
5 4 3 2 1 BLAST OFF!!!!

(This can be used as a transition or as a gross motor game outside.)

Math Activities:

- Cover wooden building blocks in aluminum foil and let the kids build spaceships with them. How many blocks does it take to...?
- Can You Count the Stars?
One star, two stars, three stars, four;
I think there are many more
Shining stars up in the sky,
Can you count them? Let's all try!

Use this as a flannel board activity and place a different number of stars on the flannel board each time you say the verse. As a group, count the stars.

Science Activities:

- Space telescopes: take a paper towel tube and cover the end with black paper using masking tape. Then take a thumb tack and punch in the holes that become a constellation. When you look up towards a light you can see the different constellations. (You could make any kind of pattern, including alphabets, numbers, etc.) Children finish by decorating their tubes with paint or stickers, etc.
- Make stardust bottles! Children put glitter and stars in a small bottle. Pour water into the bottle, then add food coloring. Put the lid on tightly (hot glue or secure with clear packing tape). Children can shake them up and look at the stardust glitter in the sun light.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- Use any of the manipulatives in your collection. Of special interest would be any puzzles you have of the planets/solar system.
- Make flannel board pieces to represent each of the planets in our solar system, plus the sun, moon, stars, etc., using Pellon. Children can create the solar system on the flannel board. Also create labels for each planet so children can see the written names and match them to the planets.

Snacks:

- Astronaut Pudding
- Astronaut Shakes
- Moon Rocks
- Have packages of dried fruit (apples, peaches, bananas, pineapple, etc.); divide in equal portions and serve in zip-close bags.
- Moon- and star-shaped cheese for snack

Songs, Fingerplays, & Other Resources:

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sspace.shtml>

<http://www.easyfunschool.com/article1084.html>

Books:

Happy Birthday, Moon, by Frank Asch

Stars! Stars! Stars!, by Bob Barner

What's Out There? A Book About Space (Reading Railroad)

Me and My Place in Space by J. Sweeney

The Planets in Our Solar System, by F. M. Branley & K. O'Malley

The Stars, by H. A. Rey

The Magic School Bus Lost in the Solar System, by J. Cole

What Makes Day and Night, by F. M. Branley

Planet Patrol: A Kids' Action Guide to Earth Care, by M. Lorbiecki

If You Decide to Go to the Moon, b. F. McNulty

Owl Moon, by Jane Yolen

Kitten's First Full Moon, by K. Henkes

There's No Space Like Space: All About Our Solar System (Cat in the Hat's Learning Library), by T. Rabe & A. Ruiz

Goodnight Moon, by Margaret Wise Brown

Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me, by Eric Carle

Eye Wonder: Space, by C. Stott

Space Boy, by L. Landry

Roaring Rockets, by T. Mitton & A. Parker

I Want to Be an Astronaut, by B. Barton

The Moon Seems to Change, by F. M. Branley

The Crazy Solar System, by D. A. DeMarcos

Planet Earth, by D. Chancellor

You Are the First Kid on Mars, by P. O'Brien

The Moon in my Room, by A. Norris

Molly Moon Stops the World, by G. Byng

Dramatic Play:

- Make astronaut helmets using the buckets from Kentucky Fried Chicken. Ask the restaurant to donate enough buckets for the class and cover them with aluminum foil. Cut out a rectangular opening for the eyes and add any details you want with construction paper, pipe cleaners, etc. These can also be decorated to look like aliens from another planet.

Art:

- Paint the inside of a refrigerator box black, cut the bottom out, and stick some glow in the dark stars on the box and let some hang down using fishing line. Be sure to turn the box over at the end of the day so the stars can get "juiced up".
- Get a refrigerator box, one medium and one small corrugated cardboard box, and one cardboard ice cream cylinder (get at an ice cream store). Cut away the bottom of the refrigerator box and cut a door in one side. Cut fins from tag board and tape to each side of the box. Have the children paint the refrigerator box and fins white. Paint the small and med box blue and tape them on top of the refrigerator box. Paint the cylinder box red and place on top of small box. Place a small American Flag on top.
- Cut out stars, moons, planets from cut half of a potato, make colorful prints on blue or black paper.
- Brush vinegar to cover white paper, stick on tissue paper moons and stars. When dry, the stars fall off, leaving cool prints.
- Blow gold paint through straws onto blue construction paper and then add star stickers to their sky.
- Staple two paper plates together; decorate as desired and use as flying saucers.

Circle Time Activities:

- Talk about the fun of gazing at the stars. Identify some of the constellations found in any of the books listed above. Give each child a sheet of black construction paper and foil stars. Children can put the stars on their paper and connect them with a chalk line to form a constellation. Children can name their constellations. Display these constellations around the room; children can "stargaze" when they lay down for naptime.
- Take a pretend spaceship ride to a strange planet (the playground). Arm the kids with plastic bags, spoons, notebook paper and pencil. Put them in groups of 2 and they each have an assignment such as...group one, your mission is to find at least 2 different kinds of rock... group two, your mission is to find at least 3 different kinds of plants... group three, your mission is to draw a pictures of things you find on the planet... group four, at least 2 different kinds of soil... Tell the astronauts to let the "captain" know if they've found any insects or if they have any questions about the "mission." The kids love this activity and it is a great way to encourage them to work as a team. Bring all of your found items back to the classroom and look at them under a magnifying glass.
- Take foil strips long enough to reach just past the head and toes of a child. You will need 2 strips and tape them together so that they are double width. Now have the child lay down on the floor face up. Mold the foil around the top and sides of the child's body; when you get to the face, warn them and do it quickly as to not smother them or scare them. Then lift off the foil carefully... hang face down from the ceiling, hang on the walls at angles etc...; they look really neat. Read books from the book list.
- Tell the children you're going to take an imaginary trip to the moon. What would you take with you? Let each child choose one item to go into the suitcase. Discuss the sound of the letter "M" for "Moon". Practice spelling it orally and by drawing a letter "M" with their fingers in white flour (i.e., moon dust).
- Make a solar system with Styrofoam balls, etc. Children can paint the planets. Connect everything with straws and dowels; display in the room all week.

Moon Rocks

24 oz. white baking chocolate
1 c. peanuts
1 c. pretzels
10 oz. bag M&M's®
10 oz. bag mini-marshmallows
paper baking cups
spoon

Give each child a baking cup and ask him to write his name on the outside. Melt the white chocolate in a large microwave able container. Stir in the remaining ingredients until everything is well coated. Have each child scoop a large spoonful of the mixture into his baking cup. Chill until the mixture sets (about half an hour). Makes approximately 25 servings.

ASTRONAUT SHAKES

3 8-oz. cartons of plain yogurt
3 very ripe bananas
1 1/2 cups of cold apple juice
1 1/2 cups of cold milk

Combine the yogurt and bananas in a blender and mix until smooth. Pour the mixture into a large pitcher and stir in the juice and milk.

Astronaut Pudding

Put pudding ingredients into zip-close bags. Let the children “mush” their bags to make the pudding. Clip off the corner and let children eat their pudding through the corner of the bag, pretending to be astronauts. You can make helmets out of paper bags with openings for the eyes, nose and mouth. Children will have fun with this activity!