

# Theme: Wild, Wild West

## Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

- ❑ Cow-Cow-BOY! (duck-duck-goose); use a red bandana for this game!
- ❑ Let children ride their tricycles while wearing their paper bag vests and cowboy hats.

*Note:*

*Infants may enjoy playing a game of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't with a toy hidden under a cowboy hat.*

## Math Activities:

- ❑ Write numbers 1-10 on cowboy boot cutouts. Let the children line them up in order.
- ❑ Cut out ten cow patterns and put a black spot on each for numbers 1-10; let children count the spots on the cow and put that many dry kernels of corn on the cow's picture.
- ❑ Use flannel board pieces cut in the shapes of cowboy hats, spurs, bandanas, etc., to help children count, add, and subtract small numbers.

## Science Activities:

- ❑ Cows come in all different colors; help the children sort cows by their colors. You can also do this with horses, but make it a bit more complicated by making all horses brown and sort them by their white markings (find two that match).
- ❑ What kinds of animals live in the hot, dry desert?
- ❑ What kinds of birds live in the hot, dry desert?
- ❑ Plant small cacti and talk to the children about how to care for them.

## Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- Play-doh. Make cactus plants, horses, cows, boots, etc. Cookie cutters would be great for this activity, or just let the kids use their imaginations and create their own one-of-a-kind sculptures!
- Art projects below give children practice developing their small motor skills.
- Infants can enjoy some of the same activities as older children if you put the baby in the high chair and place his/her materials on the tray. SUPERVISE CLOSELY while children are in high chairs!

## Snacks:

Yell, "Round-up Time!" to call kids to the table for grub!

Stew

Cowboy Cookies (chocolate chip with raisins, walnuts, and oatmeal)

Star-shaped or boot-shaped cookies

Baked beans or "ranch beans" (baked beans with hamburger cooked in them)

Make gingerbread "cowboys" after reading the book!

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

Make a giant cactus out of a large piece of cardboard to display in the corner of the room. Display the children's artwork throughout the week.

Field trip idea: If you know anyone with horses, consider a field trip to let the children see real horses. A trip to the petting zoo would be nice, too, and the children could ride the ponies or at least pet one.

**Songs & Fingerplays:** <http://www.kindergartentreehouse.com/wildwest.html>

## Art:

- Cut the shape of a cowboy boot from construction paper – one for each child. Let the children rip pieces of brown paper bags and glue them onto the boots to decorate them. Give the children odd bits of craft supplies left over from other projects to decorate their boots, as well.
- Cut out a cactus shape from green construction paper and let children decorate it by sponge-painting, then sprinkling sand onto the paint before it dries.
- As a group, let the children finger paint a beautiful sunset onto a long length of white butcher paper. When it dries, let the children glue cutouts to create a western scene. This project could take several days to complete. Working on it together encourages the children to socialize with each other.
- Make cowboy vests from brown paper sacks!

## Dramatic Play:

Cowboy hats, bandanas, vests, and toy horses can be added to the block play area! Add a few Lincoln Logs so children can set up a corral and build a log cabin for the cowboys to settle down.... Play some cowboy music while the kids are playing.

## Books:

Yippee-Yay! (Gibbons)

Cowboys (Penner)

The Cowboy ABC (Demarest & Demarest)

Little Red Cowboy Hat (Lowell & Cecil)

I Want to Be a Cowboy (Liebman)

Why Cowboys Sleep with Their Boots On (Knowlton & Rice)

White Dynamite and Curly Kidd (Martin, Archambault, & Rand)

Pecos Bill (Balczak & Collier-Morales)

Borregueta and the Coyote (Aardema & Mathers)

Armadillo Rodeo (Brett)

Matthew the Cowboy (Hooker & Smith)

McDuff's Wild Romp (Wells)

Scooby-Doo and the Phantom Cowboy (McCann & Del Sur)

Good Night Cowboy (Dromgoole & Clack)

C is for Cowboy: A Wyoming Alphabet (Gagliano)

Cowboy Up! (Brimner & Miller)

The Gingerbread Cowboy (Squires & Berry)

Cowboy Small (Lanski)

Cowboy and Octopus (Scieszka & Smith)

Cowboys & Cowgirls: Yippee Yay (Gibbons)

Cowboy Cal (Kraft)

Lasso Lou and Cowboy McCoy (Failing & Arnold)

Cowboy Roy (Dubowski & Dubowski)

Cowboy Slim (Danneberg & Apple)

Ride 'Em, Cowboy (Czernecki)

Tiger's New Cowboy Boots (Morck & Graham)

Buster Goes to Cowboy Camp (Fleming)

The Cowboy & the Black-Eyed Pea (Johnston)

Cowboy Jose (Elya & Raglin)

Cowboy Kid (Eilenberg & Heap)

The Black Cowboy (Books & Knill)

B is for Buckaroo (Whitney, Whitney & Guy)

## Circle Time Activities (include reading time & literacy skills):

- What is a cowboy?
- What does a cowboy do?
- What does a cowboy wear? (hat, boots, bandana, spurs, chaps)
- Where do cowboys live?
- "C" is for "cowboy" – what else starts with the letter "C"?
- How did people travel in the days of the cowboys? Read "If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon" by Ellen Levin. If you have ancestors who traveled by covered wagon, tell the children about them and show pictures of some of your ancestors, if they're available. This brings the stories to life for the children and makes learning history much more fun!
- Let children come dressed in western-style clothing on Friday and bring their sleeping bags. You can have a pretend "camp fire" by piling up a large blanket in the middle of the room. Sit around the "fire" and tell (or read) cowboy books from the list above. This will be even more fun if you let the kids eat their stew (lunch) while sitting around the "fire." (Don't try this if you have carpet on the floor!)
- Match a felt alphabet to the item that starts with that sound using your flannel board.