

What preschool children will *find, do* and *learn* in each Learning Center...

Construction & Design Center

Children have space to engage in construction activities and let their imaginations soar. In addition to the theme related curriculum activities, some typical items in this center include:

- Complete set of unit blocks
- Several large vehicles and several smaller vehicles
- Animals, people and traffic signs
- Recyclables such as cardboard boxes of different sizes, paper towel tubes and oatmeal containers

What children do...

Practice designing, building, organizing and implementing projects.

What children learn...

Cognitive skills such as classification, spatial relationships, balance and cause and effect.

How children grow...

Children gain a great deal of personal satisfaction and pleasure as they work in groups and build relationships with their peers.

Dramatic Play Center

A creatively decorated, warm and inviting center enhances the children's interest and involvement. Decorations and props that reinforce the changing themes keep the children excited about pretending and playing in the Dramatic Play center. Some typical items in this center include:

- Dramatic play furniture, a small table and chairs should always be present (other materials should rotate depending upon the theme and the children's own ideas and interests)
- Dishes, utensils, place mats, pots, pans, food sets, telephones, computer keyboards, old typewriters, dress up clothes, purses, wallets, shoes, menus, a cash register, paper, pencils, etc., are just a few of the appropriate materials to have on hand

What children do...

Role-play real life situations within a theme-related context.

What children learn...

Invaluable language, communication and social skills that lead to future academic success.

How children grow...

Children learn how to creatively express ideas and feelings in a group setting.

Writing Center

In addition to that theme's activities, some typical items in this center include:

- Children's Journals
- Pens, pencils, colored pencils, crayons, markers
- Various paper supplies, index cards
- Recycled magazines (that have been reviewed) and different forms of writing such as menus, books and newspapers
- Clipboards and notebooks
- Magnetic letters
- Examples of print, including sentence strips with the children's names on them, properly label led items, alphabet strips, the Word Wall in the Pre-K classroom

What children do...

Experience writing through a variety of writing materials, including their own personal journal.

What children learn...

Communicate ideas and messages through letters, words and drawings.

How children grow...

They explore their ideas naturally, creatively and in a way that enables them to make decisions that enrich their continued writing experiences.

Creativity & Art Center

In addition to theme related activities, some typical items in this center include:

- Painting supplies, pencils, crayons and markers
- Easels
- Recyclables such as wallpaper samples, fabric pieces and collage materials
- Glue and scissors
- Various paper supplies

What children do...

Paint, draw and create their own open-ended art using a variety of mediums and materials.

What children learn...

Express creativity and imagination; discover line, color, shape and texture.

How children grow...

Children develop their memory and artistic expression skills.

Reading & Listening Center

We provide cozy spaces for one person and spaces for a small group promotes a calming, welcoming atmosphere for children to experience the benefits of reading and enjoying stories. In addition to the theme related activities, some typical items in this center include:

- Children's literature, including the current theme related literature, magazines, newspapers, song and poem charts
- An audiocassette or CD player, headphones, stories recorded on tape and/or other tape-recorded songs, stories and poems
- Soft elements such as rugs, pillows and beanbags

What children do...

Read, listen and respond to many genres of literature from poetry to non-fiction.

What children learn...

Develop reading skills including vocabulary, reading comprehension, letter and paint knowledge, and sound recognition.

How children grow...

Children develop a love for reading and lay the foundation for future learning.

Math & Manipulatives Center

This center requires a table and chairs for the children. This often works well near the Science & Sensorial Center. Some typical items in this center include:

- Small calendar, weather and number charts
- Magnetic numbers, puzzles, games and flash cards
- Safe manipulatives for sorting (large buttons, stamps, stickers, etc.)
- Paper, pencils, notebooks, index cards
- Measuring cups and spoons, cookie cutters in varying shapes and other materials used to weigh and measure

What children do...

Count, group, weigh, measure, make patterns, explore shapes and make comparisons between sets.

What children learn...

Cognitive skills such as patterning, number recognition, counting and graphing.

How children grow...

Children build small motor, problem solving and social skills as they work together in groups.

Science & Sensorial Center

This center should be near a water source, preferably not on carpeting. Remember, any container used for water play must be sanitized at the end of each day with a bleach solution to kill bacteria that grows in the water. The children should never drink this water. Some typical items in this center include:

- Sand and/or water table (this can be a Rubbermaid® tub or other storage container that has sides and can hold water or sand)
- Wonder Bottles (recycled water bottles with water and oil mixed together with small shells, rocks, sand, food coloring, etc. Hot glue the lid onto the bottle before placing in the center).
- Magnets and magnetic items
- Feathers, leaves and other items from nature
- Magnifying glasses and mirrors

What children do...

Experiment with various sensory materials through theme-related activities.

What children learn...

Explore, solve problems and make predictions related to various science and nature concepts.

How children grow...

Children extend their curiosity about the world around them and their interests in natural phenomena.