

Field Trip Clipboards

Materials

Small clipboards, one for each child
Paper
Pencils, one for each child

What to do

1. Whenever the class goes on a field trip, take along clipboards for the children to document or draw what is meaningful to them during the trip. You may want to allow a time after field trip events to let the children draw their thoughts.
2. Later, discuss what the children learned on the trip.
3. Use the children's documentation as a curriculum focus for the theme or topic. This allows for further in-depth investigations of the unit and keeps the children's interest longer. The result of the documentations may stay with the current topic or may branch off into another area of interest entirely.
4. Display the results so that the children can view them as often as necessary and allow the parents to see them, too.

✿ Tina R. Woehler, Oak Point, TX

Make Your Own Prop Boxes

Materials

Collection of tools and equipment related to prop box theme
Empty boxes with lids
Labels
Photos or posters related to theme

What to do

1. Think of several prop box themes, such as doctor/nurse, restaurant, grocery store, pet/vet, shoe store, firefighters, hair salon, and so on.
2. Begin collecting tools and equipment related to each theme at local thrift shops or weekend garage sales.

3. Place tools and equipment into empty boxes with lids. Put a label on each box identifying its contents.
4. Hang photos or posters that represent the theme in the Dramatic Play Area.
5. Set out the prop box contents and watch the children have fun!
6. Change the area as the children's interest level indicates.

More to do

Set out books related to the prop box theme in the Library Area. Invite community helpers to come and visit the class and talk about their jobs.

Resources

For more information on creating prop boxes for your program see:

Young Children, July 1993, by Sue Myhre, pages 6 – 11

Texas Child Care, Spring 1997, by Sue Myhre, pages 2 –10

 Sue Myhre, Bremerton, WA

Dramatic Play Centers

Materials

Cloth bags
Fabric markers

What to do

1. Use fabric markers to decorate cloth bags for various dramatic play items such as firefighters, doctors, gardening, house, and bakery.
2. Place the items into the bag in which they belong (for example, doctor items into the "doctor" bag). Hang or place the bags in a convenient location.
3. Using the bags allows you to change the items in the area on a regular basis without much fuss. In addition, you can use the bags in other areas, such as the Block Area, with only a minute's notice.
4. At the beginning of each day or week, choose a bag for the children to use and place it in the appropriate area.