



Hands

Objectives: To recognize shapes; to recognize letters; to understand concepts such as in/out and under/over; to understand one's place in the world and to understand the body (through one's hands) as a unit of measurement.

Books:

Hands by Lois Ehlert

Hands by Virginia Kroll

Hands Can by Cheryl Willis Hudson

I Call My Hand Gentle by Amanda Haan

Mommy's Hands by Kathryn Lasky

Piggies by Audrey and Don Wood

Learn some string stories:

Cat's Cradle String Games by Camilla Gryski

The Family Storytelling Handbook by Anne Pellowski

Lost: A Story in String by Paul Fleischman

The Story Vine: A source Book of Unusual and Easy-to-Tell Stories from Around the World by Anne Pellowski (See [The Mosquito](#) for an easy story to share)

Fingerplays and songs:

I Have Ten Little Fingers

I have ten little fingers,
And they all belong to me.
(hold hands out in front)

I can make them do things,
Would you like to see?
I can shut them up tight.
(make a fist)

I can open them up wide
(spread fingers out)

I can put them together.
(clasp hands together)

I can make them all hide.
(put hands behind back)

I can make them jump high.
(raise hands over head)

I can make them jump low.
(lower hands to knees)

I can fold them like this
and hold them just so.
(fold hands in lap)



Sing and act out with fingers: *Where is Thumbkin?*

(See: *Where is Thumbkin?: Over 500 Activities to Use with Songs You Already Know* by Pamela Byrne Schiller)

Sing *If You're Happy and You Know It*

Your favorite fingerplays, mitt stories and stories using finger puppets are perfect for this theme!

Art projects:

For the brave of spirit and those who have room-sized drop cloths: put out finger paints or big, chunky brushes and washable, quick-drying paints. Ask children to make hand-prints, make big squiggles and doodles, etc., on a large piece of paper. Allow paper to dry and cut out hand shapes with Accu-cut or Ellison dies. (Or trace around children's hands and cut out.) Send a hand shape home with each child. Alternatively: have teen volunteers create Eric Carle inspired papers. Allow paint to completely dry and have teens cut out child-sized hand shapes for your preschoolers. (See Eric Carle's video instructions at: http://www.eric-carle.com/slideshow_paint.html for inspiration)

Provide modeling clay for children to play with and take home after story time.

Provide lacing cards at the library this summer.

Provide other age-appropriate craft supplies and encourage all children to create art with their hands!

Activity:

Have children measure items in the library with their hands. Ask them to report back to you and record the measurements of "how many hands high" different items are, such as your desk, a low book shelf, chairs, etc.

Message for parents and caregivers:

We build early math skills when we ask children to measure the height and width of common items with their hands.



Colors

Objective: To introduce basic concepts to foster visual literacy and language development in youth children through the recognition of color, shape and size.

Books:

All the Colors of the Earth by Sheila Hamanaka

Color Dance by Ann Jonas

A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni

Hello, Red Fox by Eric Carle

Kitten's First Full Moon by Kevin Henkes

Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni (tell this story with pieces of blue and yellow transparent plastic sheeting)

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert

White is for Blueberry by George Shannon

Fingerplays, flannelboards and songs:

Color Fish Song (Tune: Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush)

I saw a fish go swimming by, go swimming by, go swimming by.

I saw a fish go swimming by, so early in the morning.

I saw a fish that was green and blue, green and blue, green and blue.

I saw a fish that was green and blue, so early in the morning.

Color and cut out several fish patterns. Tape the fish around the classroom so they can be seen by the students. Change the lyrics to the song to reflect the fish around the classroom. When you're done singing, call on a child to find and point to the green and blue fish. That student can then repeat the song using a different color or colors.

Color Hokey-Pokey

Select four colors of crepe-paper streamers and cut them into 12-inch strips. Cut four streamers (out of each color) for each of your children. Sort the streamers by color and put the four groups on the floor. Let each of your children select two streamers of any color and hold one in each hand. Invite the children to stand in a circle and sing the following song.. Remind them to listen carefully for the color words, and explain that they will not have a matching streamer to "put in and out" for every verse.

Color Hokey-Pokey - sung to "The Hokey Pokey"

You put blue in,

You take blue out.

You put blue in

And you shake it all about.

You do the hokey-pokey and you turn yourself around.

That's what it's all about! (*Repeat, naming a different color each time.*)



Color Houses Flannelboard story

Need: Felt pieces- 6 different colors, brown felt

Cut the six different felt pieces into houses- about 4-6 inches. Cut the brown felt into a simple mouse shape – 3 – 5 inches. Before storytime, hide the mouse under a house and when your program begins ask children to guess which color the mouse is under. Ask children to count the number of houses and identify the colors. This is a great story time opening activity and Shawn learned it from Linda Colby, Mount Horeb.

Art projects:

Glitter sparkle bottles

Remove the label from a clean, clear 16oz. plastic soda bottle. Pour at least 1/2 cup of light corn syrup into the bottle. Then add a few drops of food coloring, add some glitter and/or confetti and hot glue the lid onto the bottle. Have the children swirl and shake the bottle and watch its movement. Use a rainbow of colors!

Crystal gardens

Make up a crystal garden ahead of time: dissolve as much borax as possible into very warm water (use borax until it will no longer dissolve into the water). Form a pipe cleaner into a shape and let it sit overnight in the solution. You will have beautiful crystals in the morning. Hang pipe cleaner crystals in a window or display in a shallow box. (See attached instructions for other crystal recipes.)

Shaving foam painting

Fill a zip-lock bag 2/3 full of shaving foam, add a tablespoon of paint or a squirt of food coloring, and seal the top. Ask children to squish the paint and foam together (through the bag) to make cool patterns and designs - the white foam slowly turns to color. This foam is non-toxic, so children can play with it outside of a bag. Give them a big flat surface to scoop it onto, and let them go to it. You can make various colors of foam by simply adding food coloring to the mix before you whip it. (Inspired by Kristine Millard's marbled paper activity)

Activities:

Color blending

Provide yellow and blue modeling clay and encourage children to blend the colors to discover green (try blending other colors, too). Ask children to report their findings back to you or another adult/teen volunteer; record their findings on a chart. Send the clay home with the children.

Kaleidoscope project

Ask your teen volunteers to make up kaleidoscopes using paper tubes (see separate instruction sheet). Or purchase inexpensive kaleidoscopes from Oriental Trading. Fill boxes with different tactile items, such as yarn or cut paper or houseplants or colored paperclips, etc. and encourage children to experiment with the kaleidoscopes and the items. Ask children to report their descriptions of what they see back to you or another adult/teen volunteer; record their findings on a chart. Send the kaleidoscopes home with the children.

Message for parents:

We encourage children to be curious about the world around them and foster a sense of early scientific discovery when they play with the colors found in common things.



Fiber and Paper

Objectives: To begin to recognize the different media and formats used in picture book illustration. This recognition encourages an appreciation of books and design and fosters print motivation.

Books:

1, 2, Buckle My Shoe by Anna Grossnickle Hines
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do you See? by Bill Martin
In the Small, Small Pond by Denise Fleming
In the Space of the Sky by Richard Lewis
Joseph Had a Little Overcoat by Simms Taback
Oodles of Animals by Lois Ehlert
Pieces: A Year in Poems and Quilts by Anna Grossnickle Hines
Seven Blind Mice by Ed Young
This is the House that Jack Built by Simms Taback
Wag a Tail by Lois Ehlert
We Got Here Together by Kim Stafford
What Do You Do With a Tail Like This? by Steve Jenkins

Flannelboards and draw-and-tell stories:

Flannelboard and draw-and-tell stories are perfect for this theme! Dig out some of your favorites or learn some new ones:

Re-tell *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Eric Carle) as a flannel board story.

Re-tell *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Laura Numeroff) as a flannel board story, cutting out the main story elements from the flannel.

Use the clippo trick from Caroline Feller Bauer to enhance any story (see attached sheet).

Learn *The Fisherman's Surprise* from Anne Pellowski's book, *The Storytelling Handbook*. (See attached sheet.)

Learn *The Black Cat* or *The Wild Bird* draw-and-tell stories from Anne Pellowski's book, *The Story Vine*. (See attached sheets.)

Nursery rhymes and songs:

Sing *Baa-Baa Black Sheep*, *Have you any Wool?* or *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Art projects:

Collage art

Provide pieces of paper cut into small shapes and encourage children to make a collage – allow children to choose their own style and design. The more abstract the better.



Sculpture

Provide cotton balls, string, small sticks, discarded game board pieces and other items and encourage children to make a sculpture – allow children to choose their own style and design. The more abstract the better.

Papermaking

Check out some books on papermaking with children, lay down some drop cloths and create a papermaking studio in your library. Ask teen volunteers to help with this activity.

See Denise Fleming's web site at: www.denisefleming.com to learn how she uses paper pulp to create her illustrations and for general information about papermaking for kids

Activities:

Create sensory tables or stations. Ideas include: yarn or roving and items made from wool; handmade paper (incorporate papermaking into a school-age or teen program); cotton balls and cotton fabric; wooden blocks; satin; paperclips; tin foil; sandpaper; bubble wrap; pom-pom balls, etc. Ask children to report their descriptions of items feel like back to you or another adult/teen volunteer; record their findings on a chart. Send the child-appropriate items home with the children.

Ask co-workers or story time parents to bring their knitting, sewing, crocheting, tatting and other handcrafts to this story time. After the program is over ask adults to engage in their craft and encourage children to watch, touch, try and ask questions. Is it possible to set up a quilt frame in your library? Do you know a spinner? Find other craftspeople in your community - the sky's the limit!

Message for parents: When we encourage children to explore the world through their sense of touch we are help them develop and focus all their senses. Ask your child to describe the sensation of the items s/he touches, this helps develop vocabulary and narrative skills.



Music & Dance

Objectives: To encourage children to experience the rhythms of language and to help build phonological awareness.

Books:

Baby Danced the Polka by Karen Beaumont

Barnyard Lullaby by Frank Asch

Charlie Parker Played Be-Bop by Chris Raschka

Color Dance by Ann Jonas

Dance Away by George Shannon

Hop, Jump by Ellen Stoll Walsh

How Can You Dance? by Rick Walton

I Had a Rooster by Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Mama Don't Allow by Thatcher Hurd

Max Found Two Sticks by Brian Pinkney

Music, Music for Everyone by Vera B. Williams

Twist with a Burger, Jitter with a Bug by Linda Lowery

Zin! Zin! Zin!: A Violin by Lloyd Moss

Fingerplays and songs:

Use any of your favorite songs with this theme!

Do you play an instrument? Bring it to storytime and show children how people make music. Or ask some local high school musicians to come in and briefly perform.

Me and My Shadow (tune: *Me and My Shadow*)

Me and my shadow (sway side to side)

Dancing down the avenue

I raise my arms up (raise arms)

And my shadow does it, too. (raise arms again)

I kick my legs outs (kick legs)

Then I bend down low (bend down)

My shadow's with me (sway)

Dancing fast (sway fast)

Or... dancing... slow (sway slow)

My dancing partner (sway)

Is with me when the sun does shine (arms form circle over head)

My shadow's dancing (sway)

With me, and its mine, all mine! (hands on chest, sway side to side)

From: *Storytimes for Two-Year-Olds*, Judy Nichols



Dancing Animals (tune: *Mulberry Bush*)

This is the way the horses prance (trot in place, knees high)
The horses prance, the horses prance
This is the way the horses prance
Dancing in the morning

Continue with other animals: ducks waddle; bunnies hop; worms wiggle; cats stretch, etc.

From: *Storytimes for Two-Year-Olds*, Judy Nichols

Art Projects:

Hand Streamers:

Gather drapery or shower curtain rings so that each child has at least one ring, but preferably two – one for each hand. Provide strips of cloth, ribbons or crepe paper streamers and ask children to choose strips for their streamers. (Using materials of different weights or combining different materials make the streamers float and reflect light in different ways.) Ask adults to tie the streamers to one side of the ring so the strips hang freely. Put on some music and encourage children to dance and twirl with their streamers.

Ankle Bells

Provide small bells and colorful pipe cleaners. Thread several bells on each pipe cleaner and attach it around each child's ankle so it jingles with every step. Put on some music and jingle dance.

From: *Storytimes for Two-Year-Olds*, Judy Nichols (both projects)

Activities:

Set out age-appropriate instruments and encourage children to experiment with as many different items as possible. Ask children to describe the sounds of the different instruments; encourage them to compare one instrument to another. Have an adult or teen volunteer record the children's findings.

Set out scarves of different colors. Play some recorded music and encourage children to dance to the rhythms. Vary the types of music so that children hear the range of music available. Try adding some music from other cultures.

Shadow Dances: set out a strong light source behind children and encourage them to dance, jump, skip, hop, etc. and watch their shadows do it, too. Give them streamers, toys, hoops or a cape to make the shadow more interesting. Try this outside on a sunny day when shadows can be seen on the ground or on a wall.

Message for parents: Help your children discover the rhythms of the world around them by pointing out rhythm, movement and cadences in familiar things. This helps them hear the rhythm of language and will help them how words are put together to form sentences when they begin to learn to read.



Let's create good things to eat

Objective: To encourage children to discover new things to eat and to encourage children's curiosity in the world around them. This helps foster early science skills.

Books:

Bee-bim-Bop! by Linda Sue Park
Crunch, Munch by Jonathan London
Eat Up, Gemma by Sarah Hayes
Feathers for Lunch by Lois Ehlert
Hi, Pizza Man! by Virginia Walter
Jamberry by Bruce Degen
Kitten's First Full Moon by Kevin Henkes
Lunch by Denise Fleming
Max's Breakfast by Rosemary Wells
Pete's a Pizza by William Steig
The Wonderful Feast by Esphyr Slobodkina
Yum! Yuck! by Linda Sue Park

Fingerplays and songs:

Yummy Lunch (tune: *Little Drummer Boy*)
I'll have some pizza. Yummy-yum-yum.
Some crunchy carrots. Yummy-yum-yum.
A glass of milk, please. Yummy-yum-yum.
Grapes for dessert now. Yummy-yum-yum.
Yummy-yum-yum. Yummy-yum-yum.
Fill up my tum! (Rub hand on tummy)

From: *Storytimes for Two-Year-Olds*, Judy Nichols

Doughnut

Here is a doughnut (form circle with thumb & forefinger)
Round and fat.
There is a hole in the middle (look through hole that is made by the thumb & forefinger)
But you can't eat that! (shake head)

From: *Storytimes for Two-Year-Olds*, Judy Nichols

Apples and Bananas

I like to eat, eat, eat, eat
I like to eat, apples and bananas
I like to eat, eat, eat, eat
I like to eat, apples and bananas.

Repeat verse, substituting vowels of "apples" and "bananas" to reflect the sounds of each of the 5 vowels.

Art project:



Pre-cut pieces of potato, carrot and other appropriate fruits and vegetables for stamping. Provide washable paints and construction paper and stamp away. Send stamped paper home as gift wrapping or use the paper in bulletin boards at the library. Ask teen volunteers to help with this project.

Provide bowls of different types of dried beans (the more colorful the better). Give each child a zip-loc bag and a small scoop (from hot chocolate, coffee, etc.). Ask each child to put a scoop of each type of bean in their zip-loc bag. Firmly zip the bag shut and ask children to notice all the different colors and shapes. Send each child home with his/her bag and a recipe for bean soup.

Activities:

At the beginning of your story time ask younger children to measure ingredients for ice cream into coffee cans, zip-loc freezer bags or an ice cream maker. Keep it a surprise! Don't tell the younger children what the final product will be, but encourage them to guess what they're making (write down their guesses). Ask teen volunteers to make the ice cream during the story time and to come back and serve it to the younger children at the end of the program. (See instruction sheets for ice cream instructions.)

Set out toy utensils, cookware and food. Encourage free, unstructured play or follow the lead of Madison Public Library and the Dane County Library Service and create a Play Literacy experience in which children play with writing and reading by creating a pretend list, following a pretend recipe, counting food items, writing down food choices, etc.

Provide snacks such as pickles, animal crackers, bananas, pretzels and other disparate foods for children to munch on. Ask them to describe the ways the different foods taste. Ask children to report their descriptions back to you or another adult/teen volunteer; record their findings on a chart. Remember to check for food allergies before any children eat their snacks!

Message for parents: Learning the names of common things, such as the different types of food that we eat, is a great way to build vocabulary skills.