

Epiphany Preschool's Curriculum

Epiphany Preschool uses Creative Curriculum's comprehensive, play-based curriculum. The curriculum focuses on where each individual child is developmentally, and then guides children through the varying developmental stages while maximizing hands-on, play-based learning opportunities in literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art and music. Epiphany follows Truro Preschool's standards, which is based on Fairfax County's standards of learning for preschool. We encourage children to explore, learn, and grow through play-based activities.

During the month of September, the children will have the opportunity to play with boxes. Children love the many play possibilities that boxes offer. This first lesson uses children's natural interest in boxes to explore social studies, science, literacy, math and art concepts. As children play with the boxes they will develop socially, spiritually, cognitively, and physically.

Connecting and Literacy

- Development of expressive and receptive language
- Discussing previous experiences
- Vocabulary, letters, phonics
- Written skills
- Expressing ideas verbally and through drawing

The Box Study

Our exploration begins with circle time where the children share the boxes that they have brought in and discuss their box(es) with their classmates. The teacher guides the children in a discussion about the children's experiences with boxes. On a poster board the teacher records what the children say. As the days progress and the children make new discoveries, the teacher adds these discoveries to the poster board. The poster offers the children the opportunity to revisit their observations and discoveries throughout the month. Also, by writing down all the new discoveries, the children understand that their learning is important and valued.

As the days and weeks progress, the children learn new concepts during their explorations. The children enhance their vocabulary as they are introduced to words like *face*, *edge*, *corner*, *volume*, *weight*, and *dimension*. The children learn letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds when engaging in songs and books about boxes. Also, the word "BOX" is posted on the wall in several places around the room so that the children become familiar with the letters and their sounds. The children practice their numbers when they count the boxes.

Math

- Estimating, counting, comparing sizes
- Patterns, size, shape
- Explore 2 and 3 dimensions
- Measuring
- Sorting, collecting, graphing

Physical Science

- Observe natural forces - moving boxes in space
- Making predictions
- Physical properties of boxes
- Explore cause and effect
- Senses

Many different types of boxes are placed around the classrooms, and the children play with them in different ways. At the discovery station, children begin to understand shape and size when they are encouraged to sort the boxes in different ways. The children document what they learn using charts and graphs. They discover the concept of weight and volume when they fill the boxes with different materials. When they pick the boxes up they begin to understand that the weight of the box varies depending on what they put into the box. The teacher guides them through the concept of "heavy" and "heavier." The children may fill a big box with blocks and then be encouraged to push the box and then pull it. By doing so, the children learn the difference between "push" and "pull" while exploring cause and effect. They will have opportunities to measure the boxes in different ways using both non-traditional and traditional measuring techniques.

Outside, the children fill the different boxes with water. They begin to understand that boxes have different physical properties as they watch some of the boxes get soggy, while other boxes hold the water. Some boxes will leak! They learn that boxes are made

of different materials, and they discover their senses as they touch, smell, hear and see the boxes.

Later, the children have an opportunity to hunt for boxes within the building. As they discover various boxes they learn that boxes have many different uses. An obstacle course is set up with boxes where children have the opportunity to go *through, over, under, around, and in* boxes.

Creativity and imagination are encouraged when the children use the boxes to make their own town. They can drive their play cars through this town. In the domestic area children can pretend that they are delivering boxes to their friends. At the wrapping station the children can wrap their boxes and deliver their packages to their friends. They can make a pretend house or a store out of a big box. The creative opportunities are as endless as the children's imagination.

Social and Emotional growth

- Children work together to create things out of boxes
- Children learn to take turns
- Solve problems and make discoveries together

At the construction station, creativity and imagination are encouraged when the children use the boxes to make their own town. They can drive their play cars through this town. The children have fun building structures with the boxes and then learn about gravity as they knock the boxes down. They will discover that boxes can be moved in different ways as they use their dump trucks, forklifts, people, wheel barrels, etc to move their own boxes.

The children make a mailbox and have all sorts of fun when they take turns dressing up as a mailman to deliver letters they have written to each other. Together, the class makes a book called, "If I Were a Box." In this book, the children draw or paint a picture about what they would like to be if they were in a box. During art, the children make and decorate their own box and learn about shapes and colors while doing so. During music, the children use the boxes as instruments. Shakers, drums, and clappers are examples of the fun musical instruments that are made from boxes.

The teacher takes photographs throughout the month and posts them on the wall along with the children's art work and poster board listing their discoveries. At the end of the month the children can share what they learned with their parents and they can reflect back on all that they learned while playing with the many different boxes!

Social Studies

- Boxes have many different uses
- Learn how mail is delivered
- Various buildings that make up a town
- Different jobs related to boxes