

Rainbows & Leprechauns

Bonus Activities for March 2015



Rainbows & Leprechauns

Enjoy the following activities with your children!

Get Moving!

Circle Time: Rainbow Road

(all ages, 🗣️ ❤️ 🔍 🖐️ 😊)

Materials:

- ☐ Circles of construction paper taped to the floor to create a "road" - Use red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple...in that order. Repeat if you want to make a longer road.
- ☐ Picture of a rainbow (in a book or viewed on the Internet)
- ☐ Recorded music

- Let's get moving! The purpose of this experience is to introduce the children to what a rainbow is and the colors it contains. At the same time, the children will have the opportunity to build gross motor skills as they practice self-regulation and cooperation.
- Chances are good the children are going to be very curious about the circles of construction paper on the floor! As they notice, invite them to describe the colors they see. Do the colors remind them of anything? Show them a picture of a rainbow and invite them to talk about what they see as well as their experiences with rainbows.
- Next, turn on recorded music and have the children move freely from circle to circle. Randomly stop the music and have the children all "freeze" on a color circle. More advanced children can name the color on which they stopped. Continue playing in this fashion, having the children move in different ways (e.g., hop, crawl, walk backward, etc.) as they play.

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Where do you think we should look next?*
- *What do you think we will find where we answer the last clue? Were your predictions correct?*

Program Symbols for Developmental Areas

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 🗣️ = Language Development | 🌐 = Social Studies Knowledge |
| 📖 = Literacy Knowledge | ❤️ = Social & Emotional Development |
| 🔢 = Math Knowledge | 🎨 = Creative Arts |
| 🔍 = Science Knowledge | 🖐️ = Physical Development & Health |
| ❓ = Logic & Reasoning | 😊 = Approaches to Learning |

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What colors do you see on the rainbow?*
- *Where have you seen a rainbow before?*
- *What do you like most about rainbows?*

Circle Time: A Pot of Gold

(all ages, 🗣️ 😊 🔢 🖐️ ? ❤️)

Materials:

- ☐ Pot of gold - To prepare, put gold, plastic coins OR circles cut from yellow construction in a pot
- ☐ Clue cards (hidden), green glitter or confetti (whichever is more appropriate for your group)

Ahead of Time: *Hide the pot of gold under the couch. Print out the clue cards on p. 6, cut them apart and hide in the appropriate areas. Do not hide first clue. Put it on the kitchen counter and sprinkle with a little green glitter or confetti.*

- St. Patrick's Day is a day for surprises! This experience challenges children to put on their thinking caps and work together to find a surprise.
- Act very excited as you "discover" the first clue on the counter. Invite the children over to "discover" it with you. Note the green glitter/confetti and explain that today is St. Patrick's Day. Ask them who they believe left the clue. Maybe a leprechaun? Invite children to listen as you read the clue to them. Can they figure out where to look for the next clue?
- Continue in this fashion, reading and looking for clues until children discover the pot of gold!
- **EXTENSION:** Older preschoolers or school-age children may want to create their own clues for their own hunt for gold. They can dictate clues to you or write them on their own.

Rainbows & Leprechauns

2 Small Group Activities (Toddlers-4 years)

Magic Rainbow Paintings

(Toddlers-4 years, ? 🖐️ 🖌️ 🗣️)

Materials:

- ☐ White paper cut in the shape of rainbows, white crayons
- ☐ Watercolor paints, paintbrushes (assorted sizes), cups of water
- This experience invites children to make and test predictions while creating beautiful art at the same time. During the course of this experience, the children will have the opportunity to also build fine motor control.
- Provide children with precut white paper and white crayons. Have the children draw as desired on the white paper. As children draw, talk with them about why this task is more difficult than normal (they can't use their sense of sight to see what they are drawing!).
- Once children finish drawing, provide them with watercolor paints, paintbrushes and cups of water. Before children begin painting, encourage them to predict what they believe is going to happen. Then, invite them to paint over their drawings with watercolor paints. Were their predictions correct?
- Older preschoolers can talk about the colors of paint they choose to use as well as what they like best about rainbows as they create.



Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Why is it difficult to draw with a white crayon on white paper?*
- *What do you think is going to happen when you paint over your drawing?*
- *How are you going to arrange the pins?*
- *How could you arrange the pins to knock down more pins? Fewer pins?*

Get Moving!

Shamrock Bowling

(Toddlers-4 years, 🗣️ ❤️ 1 🖐️)

Materials:

- ☐ 10 shamrock bowling pins - To prepare, print out the shamrocks on p. 7 & 8. Cut apart the shamrocks and attach each one to a clean, empty plastic drink bottles (no lids)
- ☐ Soft playground ball
- Bowling is an activity that combines large muscle skills with cooperation and taking turns. In this activity, it also includes a lot of math!
- Show children the shamrock bowling pins and talk a little bit about how shamrocks are a plant often associated with St. Patrick's Day. Invite children to note the colors of the shamrocks and then have them count to see how many shamrocks there are all together.
- Next, invite children to arrange the pins as desired and then have them take turns as they try to knock them down with a soft playground ball. Each time the pins fall, have children count how many fell down and how many are left standing.
- Older preschoolers can be exposed to the concept of number combinations during this activity. To do this, print numbers representing the number of pins that fell and the number that were left standing as a subtraction fact (e.g., $10 - 5 = 5$).

Rainbows & Leprechauns

1 Infant Activity + 1 Small Group (Toddlers-4 years)

Questions to Spur Thinking

- What colors do you see?
- What parts of your body are you using to climb through the rainbow?
- How did you figure out which parts to climb over and which to crawl under?
- What do you think it would be like to climb on a real rainbow?



Pretty Rainbows

(Infants - ♥ 🎵 🗣️)

Materials:

- ☐ Pictures of rainbows hanging above the diapering area (print from the Internet)
- Songs are wonderful tools for helping infants build receptive and expressive language skills. This one should also help you reduce wiggles when diapering!
- As you prepare to diaper the infant, point out the rainbows hanging above the diapering area. Make the rainbows move by blowing on them gently or touching them with your hand. Then, while diapering, sing the following song.

PRETTY RAINBOWS
(tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

Pretty rainbows in the sky,
So many colors up so high!
Red and orange and yellow, too.
Green and purple and even blue.
Pretty rainbows in the sky,
So many colors up so high!

Get Moving!

Climbing Through a Rainbow

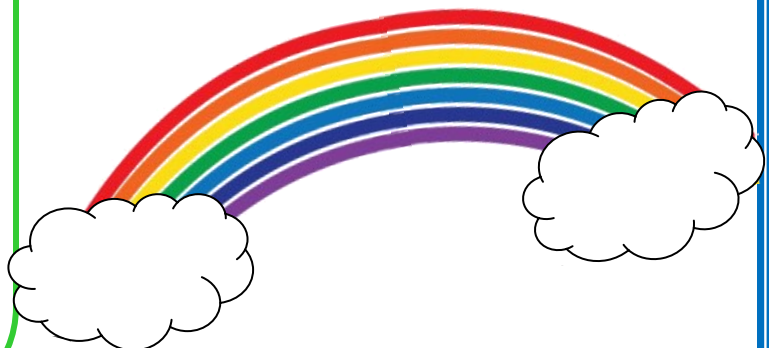
(Toddlers-4 years, ? ♥ 🗣️ 1 😊)

Materials:

- ☐ Crepe paper streamers (as many colors as possible)

PREPARE: Locate a hallway and use blue painter's tape (check wall surface first) to attach strips of crepe paper streamer from one side to the other. Use the strips to create a maze the children will crawl under, over and through.

- This experience is sure to be a lot of fun! It also helps children build gross motor coordination, exposes them to positional concepts and promotes cooperation...all at the same time!
- Who wants to climb through a rainbow? Show the children the crepe paper rainbow maze you created ahead of time. Invite the children to crawl/move through the maze. Explain that they will need to crawl over, under or through the crepe paper streamers.
- As the children work through the maze, describe their movements as well as the colors of the streamers. For instance, you might say something like, "Julie...you just stepped over the green streamer." This is an excellent way to model language!
- Older preschoolers can help construct the maze. They will need to problem-solve as they attach the strips to the walls in different ways.



Rainbows & Leprechauns

1 School-Age Activity + 1 Infant Activity

If I Found a Pot of Gold...



Materials:

☐ White paper, crayons/markers, pencils

- Creative writing is a wonderful way for children to share their ideas with others. It is also a fantastic way for them to practice writing letter, words and sentences. Once stories are complete, sharing them with others is a great way for children to build self-esteem as other enjoy their creativity.
- Most school-age children know that legend says that leprechauns stash their pots of gold at the end of rainbows. Invite the children to share what they think about this legend. Then set out the materials above and invite the children to write about what they would do if they found a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. As the children write, talk with them about the characters, plot and setting of their stories.
- Once the children finish writing, they can illustrate their stories and the read them to others...including younger children.

EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY: Writing and editing their stories is going to take several days. In addition, you may want to plan a time for parents/caregivers to come for a student-led "writing share" where they can read their stories to them.



Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What would you do with a pot of gold?*
- *How would you get a pot of gold home if you found one?*
- *Who are the characters in your story?*
- *What happens next?*
- *What was your favorite part of (child's name) story?*

Shamrocks and Water

(Infants -)

Materials:

- ☐ Sponge shamrocks - To make, trace a shamrock shape on to sponges and cut out.
- ☐ Basin or tub of warm, green water (use washable green paint to tint the water), towel

- Infants love to explore water and this activity invites them to also develop fine motor skills by squeezing shamrock-shaped sponges. In addition, water play is also an excellent sensory experience!
- Place a towel on the infant's highchair tray or a low table...whichever is the most appropriate. Show infant the shamrock-shaped sponges. Put one in the water and see if the infant will do the same with the others.
- Play with the sponges in the water with the infant, using plenty of language to describe the infant's actions. Talk about how the water feels, looks and sounds as the infant explores.

CLUES FOR THE POT OF GOLD HUNT

To prepare, cut out clues and attach to index cards. Make sure you remember where they go before cutting them out. You might want to write the location where you should hide the clue on the back of the card.

FIRST CLUE - DO NOT HIDE

A pot of gold is hiding near.
Some clues will help you find it, dear.
The first one's in a place that's cold
And it will help you find the gold.



SECOND CLUE - HIDE IN THE REFRIGERATOR

Ah, ha! You found it...good for you!
But there is still another clue.
Go to a place that holds our books
And once there just look...look....look!



THIRD CLUE - HIDE AMONG THE BOOKS

Did you find the hidden clue?
Of course you did! That's good for you!
Now, look around the place we eat.
You better move those little feet!



THIRD CLUE - HIDE UNDER (OR ON) THE KITCHEN TABLE

Look you found it! Good for you!
Just listen to this one last clue.
To find the gold, look underneath
A place that has a nice, soft seat.



The gold will be hidden under the couch!



