

Sample Activity

I Love a Mouse



Expressive arts and technology can be used to support children's emergent literacy. The following curriculum activity is based on experiences in a preschool classroom and children's development of basic emergent literacy skills after reading the book, *Look Out Patrick!* (Geraghty, 1990). It was developed to instill an interest in literature. At the computer center, children made a book based on "what happened next" to the mouse, Patrick. The children selected the character they wanted to be; drew their story; and made their character talk, using the computer's microphone to record their voices. The teacher found the children predicting and repeating phrases as the story was read from the book or from the *HyperStudio* stack on the computer. Dramatic play and technology supported this literacy activity. Children enjoyed painting with colors, drawing their story on the computer screen, and recording their story on the computer.

Teacher's Role

Provide a variety of books based on a mouse theme. As children create their own mouse story, expand their interest by reading additional mouse books. Display book jackets of all types of mouse books on the bulletin board. Have appropriate dramatic play props. Make and laminate headbands that represent mice. Make pictures of an eagle, snake, pipe, cat, mouse trap, foot, and an iron.

Outcomes

When participating in this activity, children will . . .

- Attend to a familiar story.
- Use the computer to draw characters and record their voices to create a story on the computer.
- Create props and pictures for dramatic play.
- Author a book created on the computer.
- Talk with peers as they look at books in the reading center or at the computer center.
- Develop skills needed for prediction.
- Predict and repeat phrases from a familiar story.
- Use their creative thinking skills by making up their own stories.

Look Out Patrick! Activity

Materials

- *Look Out Patrick!*
- Dramatic play props
- Computer
- *HyperStudio*
- Color printer
- Optional: External speaker

Procedure

- Read the book *Look Out Patrick!*
- Act out the story using headbands and laminated pictures.
- Make a *HyperStudio* book/stack based on the book, *Look Out Patrick!* Each child uses the tools in *HyperStudio* to draw a picture of something from which Patrick (a mouse) barely escapes. Each child's page contains repetitive text from the book. Choose words such as, "One day Patrick was walking home. It was a beautiful day. All of a sudden a (children would complete the sentence with their own imagination) . . . tried to get him. Oh no, Patrick! Look out! By (child's name)." Children create their own ending.
- The book is printed and used as a take-home book for children to share with their families.
- After all of the children have taken it home, the book is placed in the reading center.

I Love a Mouse



Literacy Links

- Read *Mouse Paint* (Walsh, 1989) to the children. After the story is read, tell the children they are going to see if they can make these colors: purple, orange, and green).
- Have the children create a *HyperStudio* book based on the book, *Look Out Patrick!* (Geraghty, 1990). Place the book in the reading center. This will allow the children to have access to the book in the reading center along with play props in the dramatic play area. They will also be able to look at the *HyperStudio* stack at the computer center.
- Allow the children to take the *HyperStudio* book home to share with family and friends. Once returned, they can read it again in the reading center.



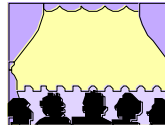
Visual Art

- In conjunction with the story, *Mouse Paint* (Walsh, 1989), tell the children to put on paint shirts. Once the children have paint shirts on, place a small amount of red onto each child's paper. Next place a small amount of blue onto each child's paper. Tell the children, "Get ready, set, and go" to mix the colors all at once. Children's responses might include, "It's turning purple!" or "Hey! It's turning a different color!" Repeat the process with the colors blue and yellow. Ask the children if they can make the color purple again. Then repeat the process with the colors yellow and red to make orange. Have the children look at their colors and talk about the new colors they made. Label and display the colors in the classroom. If there is extra time and materials, encourage the children to mix more paints using their fingers and different tools.
- Create hats and play props based on the story, *Look Out Patrick!*



Music and Movement

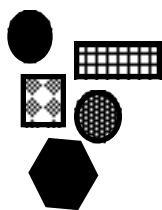
- Move as a mouse does.
- Play music while children paint a mouse at the easel.
- Choose two to three children to be cats. They will lie on the floor and pretend to be asleep. Everyone else is a mouse. Play "Scamper" from the *Witches' Brew* CD (Palmer & Cheney, 1995). The mice will move around looking for food and tease the cats by singing, *Yah, yah, yah* on the line *Old Tom wakes and hear the clatter*. The cats try to catch the mice. When a mouse is touched, it sits down and stops moving.



Dramatic Play

- Children can act out parts of the story, *Look Out Patrick!* They can use the laminated hats and play props for their story. Make background scenery from cardboard boxes.
- Create invitations on the computer and invite families for "opening day." After the play, invite the family to the computer center to look at the children's *HyperStudio* stack. Serve a variety of cheese for refreshments.

Curriculum Integration Ideas
(cont.)



Blocks/Manipulatives

Act out the story, *Look Out Patrick!* with table/housekeeping props or mouse puppets.



Sensory

Select a child and cover the child's eyes with a blindfold. Ask the child if they can see. Twirl the child several times. Have another child move to another part of the room and squeak a toy mouse. See if the child can follow the noise to retrieve the mouse. The children sitting in a circle can help the child by giving verbal directions.



Social Studies

- Let children draw a mouse book using different emotions such as scared and happy.
- Display mouse books in the reading center.
- Ask children to share stories about mice. Compare the stories to the literacy links or art activities.



Science

- Caution: This idea is only for the brave educators. In the science center, display pet mice in a glass cage. Children can assist in the feeding and care of the mice. Children will enjoy watching the mice playing, eating, and sleeping.
- Talk with children about how mice live and eat.



Math

- Read the big book, *Ten Little Mice* (Dunbar, 1994). Looking at the cover of the book, say to the children, "Let's find out if there really are ten mice. How can we do that?" If the children respond, "We count." Together, count the mice on the cover.
- With the children, sort and distribute the stuffed mice that accompany the book. After a page is read from the story, ask a child to put one mouse at a time into a pretend mouse nest. Do this until the story is completed. To engage children in conversation, ask a question such as "What is your mouse's favorite food?"



Internet Sites

- www.project-approach.com/examples/pets/pet-project.htm
- rat-info@lists.best.com
- www.geocities.com/Petsburgh/9227/
- members.tripod.com/~anraq/index.html
- www.geocities.com/heartland/meadows/1812/ourmice.html



Cooking/Snacks

- Do the following ahead of time: Make a chart with the children's and staff's names, listing three to four different types of cheese.
- During snack, present the children with different types of cheese such as Swiss, Co-Jack, Mild Cheddar, or American Cheese. After each child samples the cheese, ask them which one they liked best.
- Chart the children's and staff's responses. Once the chart is completed, talk about the results with the children. Display the chart in the classroom.



Outdoor Play/Motor

Create an outdoor game based on the song, "Hickory Dickory Dock."



Family Connections

- The *HyperStudio* book created by the children can be printed and used as a take-home book for children to share with their families.
- In the parents' newsletter, ask families if they have any pet mice they would like to share with the classroom.



Resources: Related Books, Poems, Music, and Software

Children's Literature

- Brown, M. (1961). *Once a mouse*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Cowley, J. (1988). *Mouse monster*. Baltimore, MD: Ottenheimer Publisher.
- Craig, J. (1995). *Max and Maggie in winter*. Mahwah, NJ: Troll Associates.
- Fleming, D. (1992). *Lunch*. New York: Scholastic.
- Fowler, R. (1983). *There's a mouse about the house*. Tulsa, OK: EDC Publishing.
- Geraghty, P. (1990). *Look out Patrick!* New York: The Trumpet Club.
- Henkes, K. (1993). *Owen*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Kraus, R. (1970). *Whose mouse are you?* New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Lionni, L. (1969). *Alexander and the wind-up mouse*. New York: Scholastic.
- Numeroff, L. (1985). *If you give a mouse a cookie*. NY: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Orgel, D. (1993). *The mouse who wanted to marry*. New York: Byron Press Book.
- Roberts, B. (1986). *A weekend with Wendell*. New York: Puffins Books.
- Roberts, B. (1997). *A mouse told his mother*. New York: Scholastic.
- Turk, H. (1983). *Max the artlover*. Boston: Neugebauer Press London.
- Walsh, E. (1989). *Mouse paint*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Ziefert, H. (1988). *A clean house for mole and mouse*. New York: Scholastic.

Related Big Books

- Dunbar, J. (1994). *Ten little mice*. Carson, CA: Lakeshore Learning Materials.
- Hazen, B. (1993). *Pass the cheese, please*. New York: Newbridge Communications.
- Myers, B. (1993). *Because of a sneeze*. New York: Newbridge Communications.
- Pascoe, G. (1986). *Eeny, meeny, miney mouse*. Dominquez Hills, CA: Educational Insights.

Children's Music

- Palmer, H. (1991). *Classic nursery rhymes*. Freeport, NY: Educational Activities.
- Palmer, H., & Cheney, M. (1995). *Witches' brew*. Freeport, NY: Educational Activities.
- Whitmore, G. (1995). *Mix-up Mother Goose deluxe*. Bellevue, WA: Sierra On-line.

Children's Software

- Animal Habitats: Discovering how animals live in the wild* (2001) New York: Facts on File.
- Animals Activities - Kid Pix Activity Kit* (1999). Brøderbund
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (1996) HarperCollins
- Pet Shop* (1996) Fisher-Price
- Thinkin' Things* (1995) Edmark