

Self-Portrait

Introduction

Opportunities for increased awareness about themselves and those around them can provide a way to promote a young child's positive self-image.

Materials

- Computer
- *HyperStudio*

Ahead of Time

Invite families to send photographs from home, including pictures of their child as a baby, and photos of other family members and pets, to school to be used as part of a customized program. Children can discuss pictures as they are brought to class and decide how they can put their story on the computer.

Open *HyperStudio* and select "New Card." Create a stack of cards about each child in the class by placing photographs and drawings in the program. Record the child's voice explaining what each picture is. If possible, record family members' voices introducing themselves. This could be done during a parent group meeting at the beginning of the school year or during a special visit to the class. Add the voices to the child's stack if possible. Design each stack so that there are designated hot spots the child can identify easily. Also, add some surprise spots for interaction.

Encourage children to draw a picture of themselves, family members, and pets. These drawings can then be added to their stack and animated.

Introductory Activity

- Talk about families. Read a book about families. Each child can talk about the people in his or her family. Help the children think of things that happened during their childhood. Ask them to tell stories about themselves. Let the children draw pictures of their families using crayons, markers, or a graphic program such as *Kid Pix Studio*. Include the drawings in the *HyperStudio* stack.

Computer Activity

- Encourage children to share the stories about themselves with the other children. They can demonstrate their own story to the class or have an adult assist them in showing the stack. Encourage children to talk about their family members and the contents of their story.
- Print two copies of each child's story. One copy can be placed in the reading center of the class, and the other copy can be sent home.

Extended Activity

- Encourage children to do some recordkeeping on variables related to their families. Children can keep track of how many brothers and sisters are represented by the whole class. How many live in town? in the country? How many have pets, and what kinds?
- The children could put together a class album of school activities similar to their family books. Encourage children to talk, draw, and write about their friends at school.
- Children can draw pictures of their friends and experiences in school. Put the pictures together as a class book. The children can “write” a story on their page. Read the story together as a group. The book can be sent home with each child to be shared with family members.

Summary

Using the computer, children can create a story about themselves complete with video and animation. These activities help enhance a variety of emergent literacy skills as well as promote a positive self-image for the child. The technology offers an exciting way for children to share their family and school experiences. Through adaptations, all children can participate in this story-making activity and share their stories equally.