

Wichita Collegiate School Early Childhood  
Read and Romp Day Activity Ideas for 1999-2000



**Buzzy the Bumblebee** – by Denise Brennan-Nelson

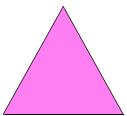
Activity – Play “Busy Bee.” This game may be played with music or without. Start the children standing in a scatter position on the floor. Begin the music and ask them to move in a certain way. (Examples: walk forwards, walk backwards, jump, hop, skip, gallop, roll, crab walk, march, or slide). When the music stops, the children “freeze”. Ask them to get together with a partner in a way that you designate when you say the words “BUSY BEE”. (Examples: back to back, hand to hand, toe to toe, side to side, elbow to elbow, knee to knee, etc.) (Other ideas: handshake friend, high five friend, teeter totter friend, make a circle friend, twist friend, swim friend, cha cha friend, etc.) Once children find a partner and stand the way they have been asked to, play the music again and change the locomotor movement. The music is then stopped, the children “freeze” and you ask them to find their first partner (example: back to back). After that, say “BUSY BEE” and have them find a new partner in a new designated manner. Continue with this pattern, changing locomotor skills and adding on more partners. Each time you ask the students to find a certain partner, be sure to go through the rest of the partners, as well. This really helps the memory of young children. Children love this game, and even very young children can remember quite a few partners. Sometimes it helps to have each child say the name of his / her partner on each skill. This helps with the memorization process.

Optional Activity – Set up an obstacle course using floor beams, mats, hula hoops, floor hurdles, cones, tunnels, etc. On the floor, tape paper bees and flowers along the route that children will through the course. (We used note pad paper in the shape of flowers and bees. These are available at many discount stores or school supply stores. The Carson-Dellosa brand has some that are very cute.)



**The Peacock’s Pride** – by Melissa Kajpust

Activity – Children were given a peacock feather and asked to balance it on a finger, palm, back of hand, or elbow. (Older children can use the chin, forehead, or nose, but must be very careful.) Have the children balance the feather in one place and then allow them to walk around keeping it balanced. Children enjoy this challenging activity and the peacock feathers are fascinating.



**The Greedy Triangle** – by Marilyn Burns

Activity – Lay various shapes like circle, square, ellipse, oval, rectangle, etc. on the floor and ask children to move all around the different shapes in a designated locomotor movement. When you stay stop, have the children find the shape that is called out and make a circle around it. This is a fun activity to do to music. The students move while the music plays and stop when the music stops. Change locomotor movements often. Have more than one of each shape so that not all students are crowding around one card on the floor. (F.Y.I. – Carson-Dellosa clip art books have fun shapes with smiling faces - - color, mount on construction paper, and laminate so they will last longer.)



### **One Cow Moo Moo!** – by David Bennett

We were fortunate to find an item called “Moo Balloons” at a local store. This balloon is put out by Hog Wild, Inc. and is a 7 foot long balloon that is made up of a paper type substance (they call them balloon bags). You tie one end in a knot and simply blow in to the other end to inflate the balloon. (It takes less than 30 seconds to inflate the balloon). Twist the end, tie it in a knot and let the children throw them back and forth to a partner. This balloon floats through the air much slower than a ball and the children are better able to keep it under control. The balloons come three to a package. For preschool and kindergarten age children, we cut each balloon in half and used the three and a half foot length. This was plenty long for this age. If you cannot find these balloons, simply take a heavy weight latex (or non-latex) balloon that is white and use a black magic marker to color on the black splotches of the cow. Be sure to allow time to dry. Have the children tap them back and forth to one another using palm, fingers, elbow, knees, feet, head, etc. Before using latex balloons, make sure there are no allergies to latex. Also, be sure to have plenty of extras on hand and assure children that it is OK if they pop, because sometimes it just happens. Stress how important it is to bring the broken pieces to an adult immediately so they can be thrown away.



### **Going to the Zoo** – by Tom Paxton

For this activity, we had a beanbag slide where children slid a beanbag on the floor toward a cardboard cutout of a zoo animal that was elevated between two Styrofoam holders or slotted cones. The children attempted to slide the beanbag under the animal. Once having done this, they moved on to the next zoo animal. Children had a partner and alternated turns sliding the beanbag toward the animal. There were six different zoo animal cutouts and the children were given a picture card that showed the order in which they were to travel to the animals. (We made up six different cards using graphics from the computer). The original game was actually an inexpensive purchase from the Oriental Trading Company, and came with plastic golf clubs and golf balls. We felt that the beanbag idea was a better way to keep the activity under control for the younger children. Another alternative might be the use of “spider balls”, if your P.E. department has them. These balls can be rolled or kicked toward the animal cards and will not travel great distances. If you cannot find the cardboard animals through Oriental Trading, something similar could easily be made using computer clipart.



### **One, Two, Three, Jump!** – by Penelope Lively

Children performed the actions to the song “Freddy the Frog”, from a new CD by Lee Campbell-Towell entitled “Everybody Move”. This is a fun song that simply involves jumping like a frog when the music plays and stopping when the music stops. The children were able to do this a couple of times. This entire tape has very good activities on it for young children and is available from the Cat Paws Company at 9115 Cross Mountain Trail, San Antonio, Texas, 78255. We also found some eyes that fit like a ring under the under the middle finger and then stick up above the knuckles when the children make a fist. (These are usually found at a party store or carnival supply store.) The first time the children heard the song, they did the starting and stopping action with only their fists. They enjoyed watching all the eyes move up and down. The second time the song was played, the eyes were taken off and the children did the jumping motion like a frog.



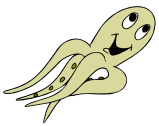
### **The Letters Are Lost** – Lisa Campbell Ernst

Organize the children into several relay lines. In front of each line place a hula hoop filled with alphabet flash cards. (One set of 26 letters in each loop). Using cones, designate a finish line and mark it with a piece of masking tape long enough to hold all 26 letters, or you may use a line that is already painted on the gym floor. The object of the game is to line up all the letters of the alphabet on the line. When a signal is given, the first person will find the letter “A”, pick it up, run down and place it on the line. That person will then run back and give the next person a high five. The new runner will find the letter “B”, pick it up, run down to the line, and place it to the right of the “A” on the line. This continues until the entire alphabet is placed in order on the line. Remember that the very young child may not know all of the letters of the alphabet, so it would be helpful to have a volunteer hold up the flash card so that the students can match it.



### **Picky Mrs. Pickle** – by Christine Schneider

This is a relay using a very large serving spoon and a dill pickle. Organize the children into several relay lines. If possible, mark their starting place and destination with matching color cones. (It helps young children if they have a different color cone than the other lines. If you do not have different color cones, tape a piece of color construction paper around each cone or use a “shoulder folder with construction paper inside.) Give the first person in each line a spoon. A volunteer will place a large dill pickle on the spoon. When a signal is given, each child will walk down to their cone, walk around it, and come back, keeping the pickle on the spoon. Continue until all children have had a turn. Be sure to have extra pickles on hand. A few are sure to need replacing after a few drops.



### **My Very Own Octopus** – by Bernard Most

Children perform the actions to the song “Ollie the Octopus”, from a new CD by Lee Campbell-Towell entitled “Everybody Move”. This song has the children acting out the actions to a story about an octopus that has many ways to use his eight arms. We also made some visuals to help the children know what action came next in the song. We drew pictures on white paper plates (the ocean floor, a cave, an octopus, up arrow, down arrow, right arrow, left arrow, etc.) laminated the plates, and attached them to tongue depressors. The first time the song played, the children listened and watched the visuals so they would know what to do. The second time through, the volunteer went over the actions with the children and they all did it with the music.



### **Popcorn Dragon** – by Jane Thayer

This activity was done with a parachute and yarn balls, using the song “How to Make Popcorn”, from a CD by Lee Campbell-Towell entitled, “Cat Paws”. The song has the parachute acting as the popcorn popper, with children simmering the oil and then throwing the popcorn into the popper to make it pop. This station was a favorite with the students!



### **The Butterfly House** – by Eve Bunting

This book was read at our snack station which was set up in a hallway between the two gymnasiums. Most of the classes made butterflies or flowers which were used to decorate our “Butterfly House.” It was a beautiful sight! The parent volunteers, who agreed to help with snack on this day, brought Pepperidge Farm butterfly crackers which were topped with American cheese cut out with a butterfly cookie cutter. They also brought orange flavor Jello jigglers that were cut out in the shape of a butterfly. (We told the children it was a Monarch butterfly.) Kindergarten and Early Childhood classes have a snack provided by a parent each day, so we simply asked that person to provide a certain item for “Read & Romp Day” instead of their usual snack for the class. They were more than willing!



### **The Itsy Bitsy Spider** – by Iza Trapani

This station was run by our Early Childhood music instructor. After the book was read, the song was sung in the traditional way, followed by more singing and the use of a cup puppet by each child. Take a medium size cup and place a hole in the bottom of it. The hole should be big enough to insert a straw through. Make a loop at the top of a long pipe cleaner, place a little glue on the rest of the pipe cleaner and place it down inside the straw. This will offer stability to the straw. Color and cut out a spider (or use a small plastic spider) and glue it to the loop end of the pipe cleaner at the top. Add tape for extra support. Do the same thing with a sun. For the rain, you can use either a paper cloud and rain drops, or you can use blue or silver Christmas tinsel that has been placed inside the loop of the pipe cleaner, twisted and hot glued. About two inches below the loop, place a safety pin through the pipe cleaner and tape around the pin for safety. This will prevent the children from pulling the straw too far down into the cup and breaking off the glued on characters. The children start with all of the characters hiding inside the cup. When their part of the song is sung they raise and lower their straw at the appropriate speed. (Example – the spider is raised slowly as he goes up the spout, but is lowered quickly as he is washed out.) The children were divided into three groups, with each group sitting together with the same character. The children had fun with the puppets! The music teacher also brought a xylophone and played a scale going up and a scale going down and asked the students to identify when the spider was going up or down the spout!



### **A Squirrel’s Tale** – by Richard Fowler

Play the game “Squirrels and Trees.” It is similar to musical chairs except no person is completely eliminated. Divide the children into groups of threes. Two children hold hands (or the sides of a hula hoop placed between them) and are the tree. The third person is the squirrel. When the music plays, the squirrel leaves the tree and moves about the forest pretending to collect acorns. To keep trees active, keep them moving in a circle, too. They can jump, hop, gallop, tiptoe, etc. When the music stops, each squirrel hurries to get inside a new tree. What makes this game fun is having one or two extra squirrels that do not have a home. When the music stops, they attempt to find a tree, thereby leaving a different squirrel without a home. All squirrels, even those without a home, move around when the music plays. In the end, ask everyone if there was anyone who was never left without a tree. Change locomotor movements often to keep the children challenged. If noise is a factor in the area that you are working, this game can easily be played without music.



### **The Sunflower House** – by Eve Bunting

This was a snack station. The children decorated the entire snack area (ceiling and walls) with various kinds of sunflowers that they had made in their classrooms. The snack was a “trail mix” consisting of pretzels, fish crackers, raisins, sunflower seeds, and M&Ms. Be aware of any children who are allergic to nuts or chocolate. For those students, be prepared to provide a separate snack that eliminates these ingredients or ask parents to provide a separate snack. Apple juice was served with our “trail mix”.



### **Ten Apples Up On Top** – by Theo LeSeig

The object of this game is to collect as many apples as possible. We created an apple tree by using a floor balance beam as the trunk of the tree and some Styrofoam “surfboards” as the branches. (If you do not have the surfboards, you can lay jump ropes on the floor for the children to walk on). We then used some relaxable (stress reduction) apples that were purchased from Oriental Trading Company and placed them on the floor around the branches. A basket was placed at each end of the balance beam. The children were divided into two teams with each team standing at one end of the balance beam. On a designated signal, the first person on each team walked along the balance beam and out on to a branch to collect one apple. He walked back along the balance beam, placed the apple in the basket and gave the next person in line a high five. This process was repeated until the apples were all picked up. This activity was a favorite with the children. They loved the way the relaxable apples felt.



### **McSpot’s Hidden Spots: A Puppyhood Secret** – by Laura Seely

With the overhead projector, we traced three Dalmatian dogs on large white tag board. (The Disney Dalmatians work well). Using laminated black construction paper and the die cut machine at school, we cut out three sets of different shapes that the children would recognize. (Examples – heart, smile face, tree, pumpkin, crayon, etc. If you do not have a die cut machine, just cut out your own shapes). We then laid the shapes on the dog and traced around them in pencil, later outlining with black marker and laminating the tag board. Using Velcro dots, we placed the soft part of the dot on the traced tag board shapes, and the rough part of the dot on the black matching shape, being sure to match up the Velcro dots so they would stick to one another.

We use this activity as a relay. Divide the students into three groups. Place a basket filled with the shapes in front of each group and place the Dalmatian boards on a table a short distance from the lines. On a designated signal, the first person in each line reaches into the basket, draws out a shape, runs down to the dog and matches up the shape. He then runs back to the next person in line and gives him a high five. This continues until the Dalmatian has all of his spots.



### **From Head To Toe** – by Eric Carle

Have the children do the motions to the song “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”. This activity is perfect with the book and the young children enjoy doing the actions. Do the activity twice if time permits. If you can find different versions of this song, it is fun for the children to hear the different ways that this song is performed. Other options include “Tony Chestnut” or the “Hokey Pokey.”

## White Rabbit's Color Book – by Alan Baker



## Brown Rabbit's Shape Book – by Alan Baker

This station actually involved the reading of two short books. To combine color and shape into one activity, we used an idea similar to the one listed above (see McSpot's...) We made a large four arc rainbow and cloud out of several pieces of white tag board, laminated them, and taped them to the wall. We cut out different shapes from five different colors of laminated paper. When we traced the shapes onto the rainbow, we placed all of one color in one arc and one color in the cloud. (We used pink, green, yellow, and orange for each part of the arc, and blue for the cloud). The Velcro dots were then attached to the rainbow and the shapes. When the entire white rainbow was filled in, it was very colorful.

If you have a lot of shapes, you can help the very young child by giving them a color clue. Simply have one shape already filled in on the rainbow so the child knows that his color of shape goes on the arc with the matching color. This will help the child find his shape faster, because it limits the area on the rainbow that he must look at.



## Mystery of the Missing Red Mitten – by Steven Kellogg

At this station we played an adaptation of the old game, "Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?" Instead of a button, however, we used a red mitten button cover that belonged to one of our faculty members. (A mitten cut from red construction paper could easily be used). In this game, children sit in a circle with their hands held up in a palms together position and one child stands in the middle with the button hiding inside his hands. With his hands in the palms together position, he quickly goes around the circle placing his hands inside each child's hands and pretending to drop the mitten inside. He will eventually drop the mitten inside one child's hands and continue around the circle until he has been to each child. He then sits down and all of the children in the circle call out, "Mitten, mitten, who's got the mitten?" Several children are then picked to guess who has the mitten. Whoever guesses gets to go in the middle. (If the child has already had a turn, be sure to let them pick a child who has not yet been in the middle). If no child guesses who has the mitten, then the person can reveal himself and he gets to go in the middle. If he has already had a turn, then he chooses someone who has not yet been in the middle.



## The Foot Book – by Dr. Seuss

Set up an obstacle course with mats, hoops, cones, floor hurdles, tunnels, floor balance beam, etc. Mark the path with foot prints taped to the floor that the children will follow through the course. After a demonstration by an adult volunteer, allow the children to go through the course as many times as the schedule permits. \*Note: We were able to find a note pad that was already in the shape of a foot. We simply laminated the sheets of paper and taped them to the floor.



**Marvin the Mouse Opposites Book** – by Jacqueline Fortey  
Illus. by Jane Harvey

This activity was organized as a relay. We found a coloring book of opposites at a local school supply store. They were copied, colored, mounted on matching construction paper, laminated, and two holes punched at the top where the pictures could be hung. We used two pieces of tag board with two plastic adhesive hangars positioned to match the holes at the top of the pictures. We taped the tag board to the wall. The children were divided into two groups and the pictures layed out on two mats. (Each mat had one of the opposites). The first person in each line was told to find a certain opposite on the map in front of them, then go to the other mat and find the opposite. After doing this, he ran down with both pictures and hung them side by side on the hooks on the tag board. This continued until all of the opposites were found. Children having trouble finding the match could match by the color of construction paper, since all matches had a different color of background paper.



**Can't You Sleep Little Bear?** – by Martin Waddell

This was a sign language station that fascinated the children. At our school, we had an interpreter for a hearing impaired student. She had access to “The Signing Teddy Bears: Honey and Cookie”. These are bears that a person puts his arms around to act as the hands of the bear. The hands are then used to sign. The mother of the hearing impaired student was the reader at this station and she used Middle School students from her signing club to operate the bears. As the story was read, they signed the conversation between the mother bear and the baby bear. The parent reader was wonderful, bringing props (different size lanterns) to enliven the story as she read. The student volunteers also did a super job, adding facial expressions and moving the bears as necessary. When the book was finished, they taught the children how to sign “Read me a book, please” and several other phrases. The children also got to go up and touch the bears. This was truly a magical station! The “signing Teddy Bears” are available from Modern Signs Press, Inc., P.O. Box 1181, Los Alamitos, CA., 90720. The SEE Center (Signing Exact English), located at the same address as above, can also give you information about organizations to contact in your area for help with a signing project such as this one.



**Mrs. Hen's Big Surprise** – by Christel Desmoinaux

Depending upon the age group you are working with, there are two possibilities for this station. For younger children, take a white latex or non-latex balloon and draw a crack in it with a magic marker, or take a yellow balloon and put purple dots on it with a magic marker. Be sure to let it dry. Have the children tap them back and forth to one another. Vary the methods of tapping. The second activity can be done if your P.E. department has a rubber chicken. If you have a large enough area to work with, play the tag game “Throw Me the Chicken”. Have one child act as the tagger (using a foam Frisbee to tag with), and one child act as the rescuer. When a child is tagged by a Frisbee, he must go down on one knee, squawk like a chicken and call out “Throw me the chicken.” The rescuer then comes by and throws him the chicken to set him free. The catch must be caught or the person is not free. Neither the thrower nor the tagged person can pick up the chicken if it is not caught. Only another student who is running by can pick up the chicken and attempt to have a complete pass to the person who is waiting to be rescued. The game continues in this manner with the chicken being constantly passed to new people. Stop the game often and change taggers.



## **Duke the Dairy Delight Dog** – by Lisa Campbell

We have some equipment at our school that looks very much like an oversized badminton birdie. They come in bright neon colors and are available from Physical Education equipment catalogs. We placed a yarn ball inside each one to make it look like an ice cream cone. The children tossed the ball up in the air and caught it with the birdie. Later, they used one ball between two people and played a game of catch. If oversized birdies are not available, the lightweight mini cones that are used in PE classes work well.