

Activities: Learning for Yourself

Learning with Rhythm

Explain that the group is to repeat the clapping pattern that you demonstrate. They should try to repeat your pattern quickly, without discussion or questions. If they make a mistake they are to just try again with the next one. Start with a simple rhythm, then increase the complexity.

Example:

CLAPCLAP - - - CLAP - - - CLAP

CLAP - - CLAP - - CLAPCLAPCLAP - - CLAP

CLAPCLAPCLAPCLAP - - CLAPCLAP - - CLAPCLAP - - CLAP

Ask:

- What kind of learning is taking place when we learn clapping rhythms? Do we use just our ears?
- Do we use sight as well?
- What about learning through our hands and the feeling of clapping?

Learn a New Skill

Teach the children a simple skill that you know, or invite a guest to come and share a skill the children can learn in one short lesson.

Examples:

- How to sew on a button
- How to make homemade lemonade
- How to give simple first aid for a cut or burn
- How to plant flower bulbs
- How to tie useful knots in a rope
- How to train a dog to sit (be sure to have a real dog to practice with!)
- How to draw a cartoon cat

Ask:

- After you learn a new skill do you have a desire to share or teach it to someone else?
- Why do you think it can be fun to be able to teach something as well as learn something?

Activities: Learn About Each Other

I Didn't Know!

Take some time to share something about yourself that the children probably don't know. Then ask each person to share something fun or interesting that would help their friends to know them better. Depending on the age of the children, you may need to give some ideas or direct the content of the discussion. If necessary, just ask questions of the group and see what everyone can find out about one another. Ask, "How does learning about other people help us?"

Suggestions:

- Who has traveled to another country?
- Who has a first or middle name that came from another family member?
- Who knows words from another language?
- Who has been up in a hot air balloon, or taken a ride on a train, or been to the top of a skyscraper?

Safe Passage

Challenge the class/group to work together and come up with a way for everyone to safely cross the room (or space you designate), without touching the floor. You may want to think about this before class and prepare the area by removing breakables if necessary. If needed, add items to the room such as pillows or a blanket that could be used.

Mixed age groups may enjoy the challenge of coming up with a path for younger children and a path for the older children to use. Offer suggestions if needed, but allow for the creative energy to flow in the moment.

Tips: Be aware of safety in your space and give some guidelines if indicated. "Islands" to land on can be made with pillows, paper, coats or books. Encourage cooperative solutions, such as holding hands with a classmate for balance or a student playing the role of safety guide.

Afterwards discuss for a few minutes what was learned about each other, and what each child learned about working together.