

Somebody Loves You

*Waldorf Curriculum
Preschool Newsletter*

February 07, 2006

ACTIVITIES

As you well know, spending time with children is always rewarding. It can help you to see the world around you in a whole new way and to value things that you may take for granted or consider perfectly ordinary. On the other hand, when you are entirely responsible for their care, even small children can be intimidating. Just what do you do with them all day? This newsletter is here to help – whether you're a parent, grandparent, babysitter, caregiver, neighbor, or anyone acting as a substitute teacher and spending the day with a preschool-aged child.

The following sections will give some suggested activities for this week's theme as well as methodology and ideas for preparation.

"Somebody Loves You"

Valentine's Day is drawing near. It's time to start making valentines! There are many many resources for valentine's day cards, kits and patterns, and craft activities. Share some of your favorites with the Group: waldorfcriculum@yahoo.com

We recommend:

- Nature's Art Box by Laura C. Martin
- Festivals Family and Food by Diana Carey & Judy Large
- All Year Round by Ann Druitt, et al.
- A Child's Seasonal Treasury by Betty Jones



One Room Schoolhouse:

This year we are taking our valentines to the post office at Loveville MD. They create a special postmark for Valentine's Day every year. But you don't have to live near a town to have your valentines stamped in this special way; here is the USPS press release describing their re-mailing program and the cities with romantic names which participate:

http://www.usps.com/communications/news/press/2003/pr03_010.pdf

Reading this press release is good practice in reading for understanding and summarizing non-fiction text. This press release is for 2003; have your child contact some of these postmasters to find out if they are still doing the program, then write an item for your local newspaper (depending on the age of your child, you could instead have a family newspaper which comes out once a week with items of interest – this could be continued throughout the year and would be a good opportunity to practice different types of writing such as interviews, advertisements, and so on).

You could design your own special valentine's day postmark and "stamp" each one of your envelopes with it before distributing them to friends and family.

For math connections, have your child contact one of the post offices to get an idea of how many volunteers have to be brought in annually to handle the increased volume of mail. (The Post Office in Loveland Colorado is now averaging greater than 300,000 Valentines remailed annually including 104 foreign countries and all 50 United States.) Make a bar graph showing how the number of volunteers each year has increased. Can you project how many may be needed next year?

Or your child could do a research report on how one or more of these cities got their unusual names. (for example: Named for Colorado Central Railroad President W. A. H. Loveland in the 1870s, this former trading post now calls itself the Sweetheart City because every February some 300,000 Valentine's Day cards are remailed from here with a Loveland postmark.)

Daily Schedule

7 am wake up, morning verse, get dressed, breakfast

8 am School

- ❖ opening verse 8 am
- ❖ daily activity 8:05 am

Monday	watercolor painting, dance
Tuesday	visit farmer's market, make vegetable soup
Wednesday	visit library
Thursday	bake bread, churn butter
Friday	handwork project (beeswax modeling, coloring, seasonal crafts)
Saturday	field trip (visit nature center, art gallery, museum, concert, dance)
Sunday	housekeeping (waxing, washing, polishing, mending)

- ❖ independent play (outside) 8:50 am
- ❖ circle time 9:30 am
- ❖ independent play (inside) 9:45 am
- ❖ clean up 10:25 am
- ❖ story, puppetry, drama 10:40 am
- ❖ closing verse 10:55 am

11 am lunch

11:30 am nap

2:30 pm snack

3 pm independent play

4:30 pm nature walk

5 pm prepare dinner, set table

5:30 pm dinner

6 pm bedtime routines

7 pm bedtime

For more details on this schedule, please visit our website at www.waldorfcriculum.com and click on the article "How to Homeschool."

Index Cards

When you follow this simple schedule, the only things you'll really need to plan in advance are

1. the daily activity,
2. circle time,
3. storytelling, and
4. dinner.

Your entire planning can easily fit on a 3x5 index card. Make up a card for the day with notes on what you plan to do and simply carry it with you. Or, if you will have the child on a regular basis, sew a small pocket to keep the card in and hang it on the wall. The child will love to run to the pocket and take out each day's card to see what you'll be doing together. Make note of what resources you need to complete the activities, such as story books, cookbooks, a book of rhymes and fingerplays, craft books, etc.

The Waldorf Way

Some things about the Waldorf way of spending time with preschool children may be new to you. Here are some general notes; feel free to visit our website at www.waldorfcriculum.com for more information and resource links for Waldorf education.

Verses provide rhythm, security, and a transition between one activity to another. They are an important way for your child to take the time to stop, rest, and center himself before beginning the next activity, and they also provide a moment of quiet thankfulness and gratitude for each part of the day.

Helping around the home is an essential part of any Waldorf curriculum. It is not necessary to put a child in front of the television while you do the dishes or sort the laundry into lights and darks; let the child help you. Even if you have an automatic dishwasher, a child can help by rinsing the dishes before they are loaded. Children love to do work that they know is truly helpful and all young children thrive in situations where they are allowed to imitate an adult. Washing the dog, washing the car, sweeping or dusting, repotting houseplants, feeding the cats, setting and clearing the table... all of these are wonderful activities to do with a preschool-aged child.

Cooking is always a wonderful activity for a child to participate in. Bearing in mind any dietary restrictions (such as vegan or vegetarian, gluten-free, kosher, etc.), food allergies, and common-sense kitchen safety, consider preparing a simple recipe with the child. Children love to wash vegetables, measure and mix ingredients, and set the table for a meal. Preparing and eating a snack is always popular!

Don't forget the many benefits of unguided imaginative *Play*. You need to stay nearby for safety's sake, if the child is in an unfamiliar environment or you aren't certain what should or should not be childproofed. All children need daily time to play. In the preschool years, play is the *WORK* of the young child. Prepare an appropriate play space and then stay out of it as much as you can; give the child the simplest and highest quality toys you can find such as large pieces of cloth, blocks, dolls, and materials from nature (such as pinecones, feathers, or shells). Avoid plastic toys. Consider a basin of water and some measuring cups or add some dish detergent and give the child a whisk. The more open-ended a material, the more of the child will be brought forth in playing with it. The more structured a material, the less will be required of the child – and the less he will grow and develop when playing with it. As a simple test, try playing with the toys yourself. If you find you tire of a thing quickly, so will a child!

The Waldorf view of *Handwork* is different from the usual craft projects done with young children. Handwork must have an authentic context – it must be truly useful and must be completed slowly, deliberately, and with pride. As children grow, they benefit from the lessons learned in doing handwork – that taking your time, following all the steps, and doing your best work will result in a product of which you can be proud.

Process – not product – is the emphasis of *Art* time. Be sure that your child understands that art activities are for learning, for exploration, and not to be afraid to have fun! Even many adults in our society are afraid to experiment with art materials because “it won't look right”; nip this attitude in the bud!

Storytelling is an important part of the Waldorf method. A wonderful resource we recommend is [Storytelling with Children](#) by Nancy Mellon. If at all possible try to learn more about storytelling and puppetry. If you just don't feel comfortable telling stories orally, we provide suggestions for picture books you can read which go along with each topic. It will actually be more damaging for your child to experience an insincere story where the adult feels false and uncomfortable. Also, remember that storytime or puppet shows at your local library can be a part of your plans for the day but **DO NOT** take place of reading one-on-one with the child. This personal connection and quiet nurturing time is a very different experience than the social one of experiencing a story in a group.

What follows are my notes for lesson planning this week. We encourage you to share your own ideas; simply email the Group at waldorfcriculum@yahoogroups.com.

Tuesday – February 7

Visit Farmer's Market, Make Vegetable Soup
Cauliflower Coconut Soup Vegetables page 78

Circle Time:
sing "A Gnome in the Garden" Seven Times the Sun page 52
make simple felt gnome All Year Round page 160

Storytelling:
read Stone Soup

Dinner:
Roasted Root Vegetable Medley Vegetables page 34

Wednesday – February 8

Visit Library storytime 10:30 am
topic is "Transportation"

Circle Time:
Monkey-See, Monkey-Do

Storytelling:
read Caps for Sale

Snack:
Banana Snake from Cooking Art
<http://www.gryphonhouse.com/activity/activity.cfm?bookid=18237&page=126>

Thursday – February 9

Bake Bread, Churn Butter:
Sweet and Crunchy Soda Bread Fruit page 298

Circle Time:
"The Elephant" A Child's Seasonal Treasury page 17

Storytelling:
read The Elephant's Child

Dinner:
Roasted Pork Chops
in Grape Sauce Fruit page 226

Friday – February 10

Handwork:

make homemade valentines

Circle Time:

sing "Nest of Silence"

Seven Times the Sun page 104

silent meditations

Seven Times the Sun page 101

Storytelling:

read If You Listen

Dinner:

Braised Red Cabbage

Fruit page 246

Saturday – February 11

Field Trip:

visit Post Office at Loveville, MD to mail valentines
27780 Point Lookout Rd. Loveville, Md., 20656

Circle Time

Storytelling:

read Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch

Dinner:

Chicken Caribe

Fruit page 179

Sunday – February 12

Housekeeping:

sweep floors, dust

wash laundry

polish silver

Circle Time:

make laundry powder (grate bar of Zote soap)

sing "Work-a-day"

Seven Times the Sun page 91

Storytelling:

read The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle

Dinner:

Baked Squash with Tomato
and Basil Risotto

Vegetables page 50

VERSES

Opening Verse

The Waldorf method places a strong emphasis on establishing rhythms throughout the day which give a comfortable sense of order and security to a child's life. One of these is to start your day (or your time together) with a short meditation called an opening verse. Choose a place which is clean and orderly; children are deeply sensitive to their environments and are unable to feel calm in the midst of chaos. Lighting a candle while you say the verse is customary, as this helps to establish a reflective atmosphere. Even if you choose not to do light a candle, the opening verse will be a transition for the child into your care. After you declare yourselves to be "ready now for work and learning", you can blow out the candle and begin your day!

Opening Verse:

In the morning at the sunrise
When the light of day doth break,
Children's souls, by angels guided,
Sleep from rested body shake,
Ready now for work and learning,
Happy, steady, and awake.

Closing Verse

Use this verse to end your time together on a high note, striving to go forth and made the rest of the day a good one. Like the opening verse, lighting a candle is customary and provides a sense of closure. When the candle is blown out, you will go forward feeling positive about the next thing to come your way.

The golden sun so great and bright
Warms the world with all its might.
It makes the dark earth green and fair,
Attends each thing with ceaseless care.
It shines on blossom, stone, and tree,
On bird and beast, on you and me.
So may each deed throughout the day,
May everything we do and say
Be bright and strong and true,
Oh, golden sun, like you!

GROCERY LIST

Produce:

leek
head cauliflower
2 stalks celery, with leaves
sweet potato
2 large carrots
parsnip
2 small turnips
2 small beets
3 medium potatoes
1 red bell pepper
2 large green zucchini
large red onion

4 yellow onions
fresh herbs: rosemary, basil
lettuce
3 bananas + 4 bananas
6 cups red or green seedless grapes
1 medium red cabbage
4 tart apples, such as Granny Smith
raisins
4 golden nugget, acorn or dumpling
squashes
2 medium tomatoes

Pantry:

Thai red curry paste
2 cartons vegetable stock
chicken stock
8 oz can coconut cream
10 oz can butter beans
orzo
apple jelly
minced garlic
dark rum
8 oz arborio rice

Meats:

4 center cut pork chops
whole chicken, cut into parts

Dairy:

heavy whipping cream
unsalted butter

Deli:

parmesan cheese

MATERIALS LIST

Simple Felt Gnome:

from All Year Round

- piece of felt (9 cm x 11 cm) in earthy color
- embroidery floss in matching color
- unspun wool fleece
- tracing paper & pencil for patterns
- basic sewing supplies

instructions for several other types of gnomes are given, including Gnome from a Pine Cone and Gnome from a Branch

Homemade Valentines:

We are using a kit from Victorian Trading Company; make your own valentines following the directions given in any of the suggested books or create valentines of your own design.

Envelope templates:

<http://www.mnsi.net/~ewswa/pages/resource/templates.html>

Envelope Glue:

This recipe makes a clear glue for your envelopes. After it dries you can remoisten it, and seal the envelope shut.

Mix 2 Tablespoons white glue and 1 T white vinegar together in a small bowl or paper cup until well blended. Using a small paint brush, or your finger, smear a line of glue along the edge of your envelope flap. Let the glue dry completely, then store the envelope in a dry place until you are ready to seal it.

Laundry Powder:

We simply grate a bar of laundry soap (Zote soap works the best and is safe for children to handle) and add several tablespoons to each load of wash. Other laundry powder recipes can be found online: <http://www.thriftyfun.com/tf223623.tip.html>

RESOURCE GUIDE

Waldorf Verses for Circle Time and Play

<http://www.waldorfhomeschoolers.com/VERSES.htm>

Activities

- Nature's Art Box by Laura C. Martin
- Festivals Family and Food by Diana Carey & Judy Large
- All Year Round by Ann Druitt, et al.
- A Child's Seasonal Treasury by Betty Jones
- Seven Times the Sun by Shea Darian

Stories

- Storytelling with Children by Nancy Mellon
- Stone Soup by Marcia Brown
- Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina
- The Elephant's Child by Rudyard Kipling
illus. by Lorinda Bryan Cauley
- If You Listen by Charlotte Zolotow
- Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch by Eileen Spinelli
- The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle by Beatrix Potter

Recipes

- Vegetables (The Essential Kitchen Series) by Vicki Liley
- Nicole Routhier's Fruit Cookbook by Nicole Routhier
- Cooking Art by MaryAnn F. Kohl

the banana snake recipe can also be found online:

<http://www.gryphonhouse.com/activity/activity.cfm?bookid=18237&page=126>

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