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Ripples & Rainbows

Splash. Dance. Shine.



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Welcome to Ripples & Rainbows

This week invites children to explore the joy of water through creative art, sensory discovery, and playful movement. As children splash, swirl, paint, and experiment, they strengthen coordination, creativity, confidence, and problem-solving skills while engaging their senses in meaningful ways.

Through water-inspired invitations, children will investigate how water moves, changes, and interacts with different tools and surfaces. These playful experiences encourage curiosity, artistic expression, and active exploration while supporting both fine and gross motor development.

We hope you enjoy a week filled with splashes, movement, color, and playful learning as you explore Ripples & Rainbows together!

with flowing hearts,
the gro academy
team

Home Extension: Patio Water Painters

Creating temporary outdoor art with water and imagination

Objective:

Children use water and large painting tools to create temporary artwork on outdoor surfaces while strengthening creativity, coordination, and gross motor skills.

Materials:

- Bucket of water
- Large paintbrushes
- Foam brushes or rollers
- Sidewalk, fence, deck, rocks, or outdoor wall
- Optional spray bottles

Instructions:

1. Fill a bucket with water and gather painting tools.
2. Invite children to paint outdoor surfaces using only water.
3. Encourage children to create lines, shapes, patterns, and pictures.
4. Observe how the water changes, dries, and disappears.
5. Continue experimenting with different tools and movements.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer larger brushes, rollers, and sturdy outdoor surfaces for children to explore safely. Model painting motions, descriptive language, and simple observations while encouraging children to make marks, move their bodies, and experiment with water through active sensory play.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Initiative • Experimentation • Flexible thinking
- **Cognitive:** Prediction • Pattern creation • Change over time
- **Health & Physical:** Motor planning • Upper-body control • Cross-body movements
- **Literacy & Language:** Comparative language • Describing processes
- **Social & Emotional:** Creative risk-taking • Ownership of ideas

Ripples & Rainbows

Exploring Water in Motion

This week invites children to explore water through creative art, sensory discovery, and playful movement. As they splash, swirl, paint, and experiment, children strengthen coordination, creativity, observation skills, and sensory awareness while discovering new ways to create and play.

Water Walls

Creating vertical water art through movement, painting, and experimentation

Objective:

Children create temporary vertical water art while exploring movement, water flow, and large-scale creative expression.

Materials:

- Large paintbrushes
- Foam rollers
- Spray bottles
- Buckets of water
- Fence, easel, wall, or large cardboard surface
- Optional sponges

Instructions:

1. Paint, spray, and roll water onto a vertical surface.
2. Experiment with different tools and movements.
3. Observe how water drips, flows, and changes.
4. Create designs, patterns, and marks.
5. Continue exploring and creating together.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer large brushes, rollers, and shallow water containers for safe exploration. Encourage children to reach, spray, roll, and make marks while modeling simple action words and observations about water.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Experimentation • Flexible thinking • Strategic tool selection
- **Cognitive:** Water movement • Gravity awareness • Cause-&-effect relationships
- **Health & Physical:** Shoulder stability • Bilateral coordination • Upper-body endurance
- **Literacy & Language:** Action vocabulary • Describing movement & change
- **Social & Emotional:** Creative decision-making • Independence

Water Track Builders

Designing pathways, channels, and routes for water to travel

Objective:

Children design and test water pathways while exploring prediction, problem-solving, and engineering through hands-on sensory play.

Materials:

- Water table, sensory bin, or outdoor area
- Gutters, tubes, pool noodles, or rain gutters
- Cups and watering cans
- Blocks, rocks, or supports
- Water

Instructions:

1. Invite children to create a water pathway using various materials.
2. Pour water through and observe its travel.
3. Encourage predictions before making adjustments.
4. Change the height, direction, or position to affect flow.
5. Test different designs and compare outcomes.
6. Revise, rebuild, and improve the track through experimentation.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Provide simple channels, tubes, and pouring containers arranged at varying heights for safe exploration. Encourage children to pour, observe, and follow the movement of water while modeling descriptive vocabulary such as flow, splash, fast, slow, full, and empty. Support early problem-solving by helping children notice how changes to the setup affect where the water travels.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Strategic thinking • Problem-solving • Revising plans
- **Cognitive:** Prediction • Engineering concepts • Spatial relationships
- **Health & Physical:** Bilateral coordination • Material manipulation • Motor planning
- **Literacy & Language:** Process vocabulary • Explaining ideas and outcomes
- **Social & Emotional:** Collaboration • Persistence through challenges

Splash & Move Path

Following water-inspired movement challenges through active play

Objective:

Children build coordination, balance, and body awareness through water-themed movement experiences.

Materials:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Spray bottles
- Buckets of water
- Sponges
- Pool noodles or markers
- Outdoor play space

Instructions:

1. Create a movement path using chalk, water marks, or simple obstacles.
2. Invite children to jump over puddles, tiptoe along rivers, and weave around waves.
3. Add water tools such as spray bottles or sponges at different stations.
4. Encourage children to complete the course using different movements.
5. Redesign the path and try new challenges together.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Create a simple path with large movement spaces and water play stations. Encourage children to step, reach, carry, spray, and explore at their own pace while modeling action words and movement vocabulary.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Following multi-step challenges • Adaptability • Task engagement
- **Cognitive:** Sequencing • Spatial awareness • Route planning
- **Health & Physical:** Dynamic balance • Locomotor skills • Body coordination
- **Literacy & Language:** Movement vocabulary • Following directions
- **Social & Emotional:** Self-confidence • Turn-taking • Cooperative participation

Water Tool Exploration Station

Investigating how different tools move, spray, drip, and transfer water

Objective:

Children compare and experiment with water tools while exploring their unique functions and effects.

Materials:

- Spray bottles
- Droppers or pipettes
- Turkey basters
- Funnels
- Sponges
- Paintbrushes
- Cups and containers
- Water table or sensory bin

Instructions:

1. Provide various water tools and containers for exploration.
2. Invite children to test and observe the tools' movements.
3. Encourage comparisons of water capacity and movement.
4. Predict the effectiveness of each tool.
5. Experiment by combining tools for new water movement methods.
6. Share observations and discoveries with others.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer large sponges, cups, funnels, and spray bottles for safe exploration. Encourage children to squeeze, pour, scoop, spray, and transfer water between containers while modeling action words such as fill, empty, drip, spray, soak, and squeeze. Support children as they compare how different tools feel, move, and interact with water.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Investigation • Tool experimentation • Comparing strategies
- **Cognitive:** Classification • Prediction • Functional relationships
- **Health & Physical:** Hand strength • Grip control • Fine motor precision
- **Literacy & Language:** Comparison vocabulary • Describing observations
- **Social & Emotional:** Decision-making • Independence • Collaborative discovery

Sun Art Discoveries

Observing how water art changes, fades, and disappears in the sun

Objective:

Children investigate how sunlight, heat, and time affect water-based artwork and designs.

Materials:

- Buckets of water
- Paintbrushes
- Foam brushes or rollers
- Spray Bottles
- Sidewalk, fence, patio, or outdoor surface
- Optional chalk for marking observations

Instructions:

1. Invite children to create artwork with water.
2. Observe the immediate appearance of the artwork.
3. Predict changes as sunlight affects it.
4. Revisit to notice changes over time.
5. Compare artwork in sun and shade.
6. Create new designs and explore water changes throughout the day.

Infant & Toddler Adaptation:

Offer large brushes, rollers, and water containers for safe exploration. Encourage children to paint, spray, and make marks while modeling simple observations such as wet, dry, dark, light, gone, and again. Support children in noticing how water changes and disappears over time.

Developmental Connections:

- **Approaches to Learning:** Observation • Prediction • Investigative thinking
- **Cognitive:** Change over time • Cause-and-effect relationships • Scientific inquiry
- **Health & Physical:** Upper-body control • Tool coordination • Motor planning
- **Literacy & Language:** Observation vocabulary • Describing changes and comparisons
- **Social & Emotional:** Patience • Wonder • Confidence in making discoveries

Facilitator Focus: Ripples & Rainbows

🌟 **Theme** *Children engage with water through creative art, sensory exploration, and active movement. They use painting tools and water pathways to enhance coordination, problem-solving, creativity, and scientific thinking while enjoying sensory play.*



🌸 **Overview**

This week's activities invite children to splash, swirl, paint, build, and move as they investigate the many ways water can be used for learning and discovery. Through process art, engineering challenges, sensory exploration, and movement experiences, children strengthen physical development, creative expression, observation skills, and critical thinking while exploring the properties of water.



🌱 **Facilitator Tips**

- Encourage experimentation rather than focusing on finished products.
- Ask open-ended questions that promote observation and prediction.
- Allow children to revisit and redesign their creations over time.
- Introduce a variety of tools and materials to support investigation.
- Emphasize the process of discovery, testing, and problem-solving.



🌻 **Vocabulary to Emphasize**

ripple • swirl • splash • spray • drip • flow • absorb • evaporate • pathway • ramp • channel • prediction

Short Sentence Prompts (for modeling language):

- "What do you notice happening to the water?"
- "How could we change the way the water moves?"
- "What do you think will happen next?"



Developmental Connections (WMEELS Alignment)



Approaches to Learning:

- Children develop initiative, experimentation, flexible thinking, persistence, and problem-solving as they test ideas, revise plans, and investigate how water behaves in different environments.



Cognition & General Knowledge:

- Children strengthen prediction, observation, spatial reasoning, classification, engineering thinking, cause-and-effect understanding, and scientific inquiry while exploring water movement, tool functions, and environmental changes.



Health & Physical Development:

- Children build gross motor coordination, balance, body awareness, upper-body strength, hand strength, fine motor control, bilateral coordination, and motor planning through painting, pouring, spraying, building, and movement experiences.



Language & Literacy Development:

- Children expand descriptive vocabulary, comparison language, process vocabulary, observation skills, conversational language, and communication abilities while discussing predictions, discoveries, and creative ideas.



Social & Emotional Development:

- Children develop confidence, independence, creative risk-taking, cooperation, persistence, and resilience as they experiment, solve problems, share materials, and engage in open-ended learning experiences.



Reflection for Educators

- Which materials or experiences encouraged the most experimentation and problem-solving?
- How did children demonstrate observation, prediction, or engineering thinking during play?
- Which activities generated the highest levels of engagement, creativity, or movement?