



SJSU Lab Preschool Newsletter

April/May 2008

Ooey-Gooey-Muck!

Are you wondering why we LOVE to play with ooey-gooey materials? When it comes to learning about science and math, practicing hand-eye coordination, exploring cause and effect, and working on our problem solving skills, the sensory experiences come to mind. Many children require and take pleasure in a full bodied experience, and some do just as well observing or using a craft stick to explore.

We encourage children to use words to describe what they see, feel, and smell. They'll also observe, compare, experiment and practice descriptive and expressive skills. Children identify, compare and classify items as they investigate the world around them. Preschoolers love the process of creating far more than the final product. They enjoy experimenting with a variety of media and tools, using them to express feelings and ideas while honing basic skills.

This past month our student teachers have provided an array of materials for our children to explore. Here are a few ideas to try at home...your children will love it! For many of these experiences we used our sensory tub, but an old baby bath works well. Check out the dollar store! For the child who may not want to touch these materials, you can place just about anything in Ziploc bags to explore and mix.

Shaving Cream Fun: Cover your table with wax paper or use a tub. Squeeze out some shaving cream onto the surface. Allow the

children to add water colors to the shaving cream, if desired. Squish it all around! (For variation, add glue, and see how the texture will change.)

Ooblick: Equal Parts of cornstarch and water. This can also be done in a LARGE salad or pasta bowl.

Baking Soda and Vinegar: Put baking soda in a pie tin, pour vinegar on top of the baking soda. **There are so many variations to this experiment.

- Pour about a ¼ cup of vinegar in an empty water bottle. Spoon about 1 tsp of baking soda into a balloon. Stretch and fit the balloon over the bottle opening, lift the balloon up so the baking soda falls into the vinegar and watch the reaction blow up the balloon.
- Build a volcano in your sandbox. Scoop out a hole in the top and put baking soda in the hole. Pour vinegar on top and watch your volcano erupt! Color your vinegar with liquid water colors for fun.

Magnet Painting: Drip some liquid watercolor or paint onto a paper plate. Place magnetic marbles in the paint and then hold a magnet wand under the plate. Using the magnet wand underneath the plate, move the magnetic marbles through the paint and watch the colors mix!

- Here at preschool we used a sheet of Plexiglas over a few wooden blocks.

Places to visit!

I have had many conversations with parents and children about the wonderful places they have been and thought I would share this information with everyone. Some places you already know of and some you should definitely check out!

- 👉 **Ardenwood Historic Farm** – Fremont. Join in doing old fashioned farm chores, visit a cow or a sheep, ride a horse drawn railroad, or tour a fully restored Victorian farm house. <http://www.fremont.gov/Recreation/ArdenwoodPark/default.htm>
- 👉 **Hidden Villa** – Los Altos Hills. Hidden Villa is a nonprofit educational organization that uses its organic farm, wilderness, and community to teach and provide opportunities to learn about the environment and social justice. You can sign up for a class to milk a cow! <http://www.hiddenvilla.org/>
- 👉 **Lake Elizabeth** – Fremont. This Park has 4 playgrounds, picnic areas, a 2 mile dirt path around the 83 acre lake, paddle boat rentals, and more. <http://www.fremont.gov/Recreation/LakeElizabeth/default.htm>
- 👉 **Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo** - Palo Alto. A small zoo with snakes, birds, bats, bunnies, and fish. Bring a picnic lunch and dine at nearby Rinconada Park where you'll find two nice children's play areas. <http://www.pajmzfriends.org/>
- 👉 **San Francisco Bay Trail** – This paved trail is over 250 miles in length. One section, from Foster City to San Francisco, this trail is right on the Bay. Great for bikes, scooters, and skates. <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/baytrail/baytrail.html>
- 👉 **Seymour Marine Discovery Center** – Santa Cruz. Hold a sea star, marvel at the world's largest whale skeleton, see full-size elephant seal sculptures, and think like a scientist! <http://www2.ucsc.edu/seymourcenter>
- 👉 **Vasona Lake County Park** – Los Gatos. Great park with paddle & row boats for rental, playground, and right next door is Oak Meadow Park where you can ride Billy Jones' Wildcat Railroad and carousel for a small fee. The Los Gatos Creek Trail runs along this park.
- 👉 **Your Local Farmers' Markets!** – Campbell, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Milpitas... just about every city has one. Wonderful way to involve your children in choosing fresh fruits and vegetables. Sunnyvale's includes live music!

Dates to Remember!

- May 6th is our Family PotLuck!
- May 7th, 8th, 12th are Parent Conferences.

Please do not hesitate to contact me.

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**If you need to get in touch with me during class time,
please call the kitchen phone.