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Pen Pal Club: Handwriting and fine motor development

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NEBRASKA HONORS PROGRAM
CLC EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY CLUBS
INFORMATION SHEET

Name of Club: Pen Pal Club

Age/Grade Level: Kindergarten-2nd Grade

Number of Attendees: 20

Goal of the Club: (learning objectives/outcomes)

Develop fine motor and handwriting skills through the use of “Pen Pal” activities.

Resources: (Information for club provided by)

Content Areas: (check all that apply)

- Arts (Visual, Music, Theater & Performance)
- Literacy
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- Social Studies
- Wellness (Physical Education, Health, Nutrition & Character Education)

Outputs or final products:

Students will develop writing and other fine motor skills

Introducing your Club/Activities:

The goal of this “Pen Pal” club is to help students develop better letter development and handwriting skills through the use of fine motor development and handwriting practice.

General Directions:

Tips/Tricks:

While all of these activities are possible to conduct with a classroom sized group, to really develop these skills well students will require some one on one attention.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Get to Know You- Acrostic Name Poems

Name:

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Pencils, lined handwriting paper, pencil grips, construction paper, glue sticks, markers

Directions:

Have students place pencil grip onto pencil. Then, write the letters of their own name going down the side of the paper. Think of words that describes them that starts with each letter in their name. Write the words on the paper. Once finished, glue the handwriting paper onto construction paper to decorate.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students developed writing skills and practiced proper letter formation.

Parts of activity that worked:

The “easier” letters in the student’s names were matched with a descriptive word fairly easily (i.e. “N” for “nice”)

Parts of activity that did not work:

Some students had difficulty coming up with descriptive words that started with the letters in their names.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

**Lesson Activity
Name:**

Valentine's Day

Length of Activity:

45 minutes

Supplies:

Pencils, red and pink construction paper, white printer paper, scissors, markers, glue sticks

Directions:

Cut construction paper and white paper into two hearts. Glue white heart on top of colored heart. Use markers to write a Valentine's Day message to someone they love. Supply Valentines for the kids, from their own "Pen Pal".

Conclusion of the activity:

Students practiced fine motor skills by cutting, tracing, and writing. These skills all aid students in developing their writing skills.

Parts of activity that worked:

Students loved reading the valentines they received!

Parts of activity that did not work:

Depending on age/skill level, some students struggled with word/sentence formation.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Pen Pal Letters

Name:

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Lined handwriting paper, pencils, pencil grips, legal envelopes

Directions:

Use pencil with pencil grips to write a letter (on lined handwriting paper) to a college student pen pal. Have the students write about what they are doing in school (what they are learning, what they ate for lunch, etc.). Students will then each open their own letter from a college student, explaining what their days at school are like.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students practiced letter, word, and sentence formation.

Parts of activity that worked:

Students were eager to reply to the letter they received!

Parts of activity that did not work:

Students struggled with creating a cohesive letter. Next time, we would create an outline for students to follow that will allow them to insert a few of their own words.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Name: St. Patrick's Day Pot of Gold Activity

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Paper, markers, pencils, glue sticks, large white construction paper, scissors

Directions:

Have students write something they would hope to find at the end of the rainbow inside a pot of gold. Cut out the pot of gold and glue it to the large construction paper. Draw a rainbow on the paper, coming out of the pot of gold.

Conclusion of the activity:

Parts of activity that worked:

Parts of activity that did not work:

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Name: April Fools

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Pencils, lined handwriting paper, pencil grips

Directions:

Have students use pencils, with pencil grips, to write their favorite joke to their pen pal.

Conclusion of the activity:

Parts of activity that worked:

Parts of activity that did not work:

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Name:

Sensory Writing

Length of Activity:

45 minutes

Supplies:

Shaving cream, Clorox wipes and paper towels, gallon Ziploc bags, different colored sprinkles

Directions:

Station 1: Writing with shaving cream! Cover desks with shaving cream. Kids will write letters and words with their fingers in the shaving cream. Clean hands and desks off afterwards! Station 2: Writing with sprinkles! Kids will fill their gallon Ziploc with different-colored sprinkles and shake to mix. Seal the Ziploc bag and squeeze out the air. Kids will write letters on the bag with their fingers.

Conclusion of the activity:

Parts of activity that worked:

Parts of activity that did not work:

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Lesson Activity Name: Chalk Writing Activity

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Sidewalk chalk

Directions:

Pick a nice day, go outside, and allow kids' creativity to flow with sidewalk chalk! Encourage students to practice specific letters/words to practice letter formation.

Conclusion of the activity:

This activity was a fun way to get students out of the classroom while continuing to practice writing skills.

Parts of activity that worked:

Students loved the freedom to be creative with their work outdoors.

Parts of activity that did not work:

None!

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Name: Earth Day

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Earth day worksheet, pencils, markers

Directions:

Start off the lesson by explaining Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Have kids fill out worksheet on how they can help the planet in these and other ways. They can decorate their worksheet with flowers, trees, or whatever they want!

Conclusion of the activity:

Parts of activity that worked:

Parts of activity that did not work:

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Name: Teacher Appreciation Day

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: *The Teacher from the Black Lagoon* by Mike Thaler, handwriting paper, legal envelopes, pencils

Directions:

Start off by reading *The Teacher from the Black Lagoon*. Then, have each student write a letter to their favorite teacher about why they appreciate them so much!

Conclusion of the activity:

Parts of activity that worked:

Parts of activity that did not work:

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity Name: Oh, the Places You'll Go

Length of Activity: 45 minutes

Supplies: Tissue paper (at least 3 different colors, cut into 2-inch squares), blue construction paper, white paper, Elmer's glue, markers, scissors, cardstock circle stencil and cardstock basket stencil

Directions:

Station 1: Make balloon. Trace circle onto top of white construction paper. Roll squares of tissue paper into balls, glue onto traced circle. Station 2: Trace basket shape on white construction paper. Write a goal on the basket. Cut out 2 strips to connect balloon to basket. Glue basket and connecting strips to blue construction paper.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students developed fine motor skills by writing, rolling, gluing, tracing, and cutting, and came up with meaningful, short-term goals for themselves.

Parts of activity that worked:

The students enjoyed decorating their hot air balloon and basket and were excited to come up with goals and share them with their friends!

Parts of activity that did not work:

Trace out the balloon and basket shape for each student to cut out in advance, as sharing the cardstock stencils took a long time.
