

This book belongs to

Table of Contents

Using a Theme to Integrate the Curriculum with Learning Centers....3	Dramatic Play Center.....19
Developing a Theme with Learning Centers..4	Construction Center.....20
Designing Meaningful Starting Points for themes.....5	Field Trip Ideas.....21
Starting Point for Camping Theme.....5	Field Trip Name Tags.....22
Room Arrangement.....7	Field Trip Log (Student's).....23
Labels for Learning Centers.....9	Field Trip Log (Teacher's).....24
Literature for the Camping Theme.....10	Culminating Activity Ideas.....25
Language Center.....11	Assessment Rubric.....26
Math Manipulatives Center.....13	Letters to Parents.....27
Social Studies Center.....15	Class Camping Newsletter.....29
Science Center.....15	Resources.....30
Art Center.....17	Clip Art.....31

Cover art by Gary Mohrman. Cover photo by Images and More Photography

Copyright 2000, Teaching & Learning Company

ISBN No. 978-1-4291-1170-6

Printing No. 287554321

Teaching & Learning Company
Dayton, OH 45401-0802
www.LorenzEducationalPress.com

The purchase of this book entitles teachers to make copies for use in their individual classroom only. This book, or any part of it, may not be reproduced in any form for any other purposes without prior written permission from the Teaching & Learning Company. It is strictly prohibited to reproduce any part of this book for an entire school or school district, or for commercial resale.

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America



At the time of publication, every effort was made to insure the accuracy of the information included in this book. However, we cannot guarantee that the agencies and organizations mentioned will continue to operate or maintain those current locations

TLC10237 Copyright Teaching & Learning Company, Carthage, IL

Developing a Theme with Learning Centers

There are many advantages to developing themes through tasks in the learning centers already established in your classroom. Tasks are added to the learning centers to reflect what you are studying.

Use these guidelines to develop the tasks to reflect your theme:

That Are Motivating to the Children

Tasks

Choose tasks that are interesting to the children, ones that allow work for a meaningful amount of time. Tasks in learning centers may be done many times. The best test for meaningful tasks is if the children want to go back to them again.

That Provide Real Experiences

Tasks

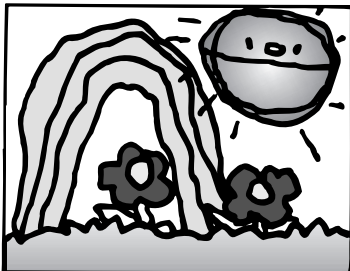
Develop tasks that will provide real experiences about the theme. Children need to feel as if every task that they work on has a purpose. Meaningful tasks are ones where the child can stay with the work for a sustained amount of time. These tasks will keep children engaged and develop deeper understanding about the theme.



That Allow Children to Construct Knowledge

Tasks

Tasks should be developed that allow the children to begin with what they think they know about a theme and build on that knowledge to develop deeper understandings. One way children construct new knowledge is from conversations with other children about their work. Consider tasks that encourage children to discuss what they are doing.



Tasks

That Have a Process and a Product

The product is an important way for the child to show what he or she has figured out in the process. Whether it is an art piece, writing or some other creation, the product serves as the indication that the child has figured out something which can be shown to others.

Designing Meaningful Starting Points for Themes

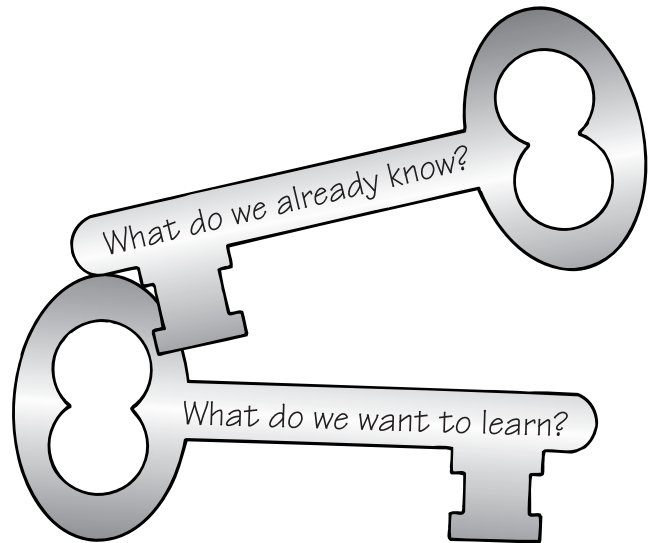
Starting Point

Think broadly about a starting point. Traditionally books have been used to introduce a theme. But what could be designed that would give you feedback about what information the children bring to the theme? Create a scenario that has mystery, something memorable that you will be able to refer to throughout the theme. The starting point should be unexpected with an element of surprise.

The starting point should lead to a discussion that results in gathering information around the key areas:

What do we already know?

What do we want to learn?



Print the information on large charts with the heading listed at the top. As each child contributes information for the charts, transcribe his or her words and the child's name.

Post the charts in a place that is at the eye level of the children. Plan to leave the charts posted throughout the theme and refer to them often. When the children discuss information they have learned from a task they have completed, relate it to the chart to help them connect what they're learning.

Add a third chart with the heading *Other Things We Want to Learn*. Add information that is acquired throughout the theme.



Starting Point for the Camping Theme

Print the following questions at the top of separate sheets of chart paper with a marker:

- What do I need to sleep on a camping trip?
- What things do I need to eat my meals on a camping trip?
- What things do I need to cook my meals on a camping trip?
- What can I do while I am on a camping trip?

Gather the children and tell them that you have been invited to go on a camping trip. Explain that you have some questions about camping trips that you need answered before you agree to the trip. Ask them to help you with these questions.

Divide the children into four groups. Present each of the questions and assign one question to each of the groups. Suggest that the groups discuss the questions and share what they know about camping. Encourage the children to work cooperatively while they discuss the questions. Monitor each group and help as necessary to facilitate their work. Ask each group to print lists of supplies on their chart paper.

Provide resource books on camping and outdoor supply catalogs to help them locate new terms. Younger children may complete their lists by cutting out pictures from the catalogs and gluing them onto the chart paper.

When the lists are completed, gather the children and allow each group to review their list with the others. Encourage the children to ask questions of each group and make additional suggestions.

Tell the children that their interest in camping has been helpful and that a study on camping might further help your decision about the camping trip. Introduce the camping theme. Ask the children for their input on other things they could do to learn more about camping. Post the charts as a reference for the theme.

