

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AT SHOWS AND EVENTS



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Introduction

Children almost always learn best by “doing”. When they attend shows and events, they may spend some time listening and observing but they also benefit from the opportunity to get involved in activities. As well as enjoying themselves, children will develop a variety of manipulative and creative skills.

You may also end up with a very attractive stand at the show!

Levels of supervision required vary for each of these activities and depend on the age of your visitors. Plastic tablecloths or other easily cleaned surfaces are best for many of these activities which use glue or paint. If you look after them and clean them well after each event, the initial investment will be well worth it!



Being organised is crucial. Make sure that you have everything prepared well in advance of the event. Organise all your components into plastic tubs with lids where appropriate (easier to transport). Do not underestimate the amount of materials you might get through in a day. News soon travels if your stand has something appealing to offer to the children!

This booklet has come about by the sharing of ideas amongst members of the FACE team who attend many events for children during the year.

Please send us your ideas to add to these! Email: enquiries@face-online.org.uk

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Giant murals

Materials required

Use emulsion paint to create a very basic scene on a background. Have available for the children vinyl wallpaper or roller blind fabric*, a glue such as Copydex, paints or wax crayons.

Instructions

Hang the background scene on a wall or attach to the side of a marquee. Children create animals, birds and flowers on scraps of wallpaper or roller blind fabric and these can be attached to the scene to make a very attractive mural.

Comments

A mural such as this can be added to throughout the day of the event or, indeed, over several days!

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Painted Murals

Materials required	Use emulsion paint to create a very basic scene on a background. Have available for the children large paintbrushes and a selection of poster paints.
Instructions	Hang the background scene on a wall or attach to the side of a marquee. Children create animals, birds and flowers by painting directly onto the background image.
Comments	Comments This works in the same way as the Giant Mural but instead of “cut and stick” children use their artistic skills to paint directly onto the background.

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Giant jigsaw

Materials required

Some work in advance is required! Use a sheet of mdf and a jigsaw tool to create giant jigsaw floor puzzles. The image can be painted on yourself if you have an artistic flair or you may be able to stick a large poster or other image onto the background before starting work with the jigsaw.

Instructions

Leave the giant pieces lying around for young visitors to piece together!

Comments

A simple activity which requires a bit of thought in advance but will then provide a long lasting activity for many events!



Bunting

Materials required

Use roller blind fabric* and cut out triangular shapes for the bunting. Hang long strings or ribbons of fabric on which to attach the bunting

Instructions

Instructions Children can paint straight onto the fabric triangles or their artwork can be stapled on instead. Attach the triangles to the string with pegs or pre punch holes and tie to the strings.

Comments

Comments This makes a very colourful display. Choose a theme such as "Food" or "The countryside" depending on the nature of the event.

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Seed pictures

Materials required

Use small pieces of card* for each background. You can leave them blank for free expression or draw on templates. Templates can also be bought from craft shops. Set out in small containers a variety of different coloured grains, seeds and lentils. You will also need pots of glue and glue brushes or glue sticks, again available from craft stores.

Instructions

Children apply glue to the backing card and add different coloured grains to create an image.

Comments

Extend this activity by having explanatory information or displays available about the origin and uses of the grains.

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Pom pom sheep

Materials required

For each sheep cut two circular pieces of card* with a smaller ring cut in the centre, large enough for a small ball of wool to be passed through. Have available small balls of wool of appropriate colours, felt face shapes (ready cut) and eyes. Scissors and glue are needed.

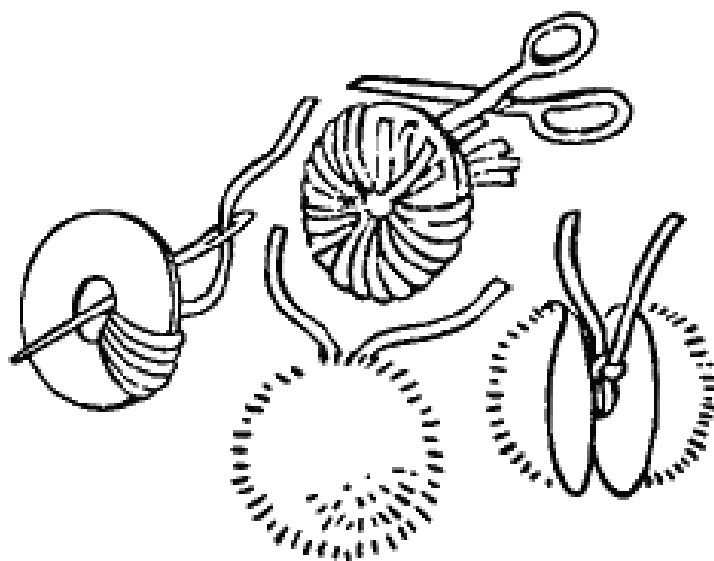
Instructions

Each child has two card circles and is shown how to wind the wool round and round for about three layers. With adult supervision, the wool is cut carefully between the two outer layers of the card rings. A length of wool is wrapped in between the two outer edges and is pulled tight and knotted. This should create the pom pom! A face shape and eyes can be glued on.

Comments

Adult guidance is usually necessary for this activity. Many children will demonstrate immense patience in creating their sheep and adults accompanying them are often enticed to join in!

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Pine cone animals

Materials required Have available a selection of pine cones of various sizes, felt*, pipe cleaners, glue and eyes.

Instructions Children create their own animals using the pine cone as a body and creating pipe cleaner tails, felt ears and eyes

Comments This is a simple activity which is always popular.

* For scrap materials, see if you have a local Children's Scrapstore:
www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk



Paper pots

Materials required

Purchase a number of paper potters (for retailers look up paper potter in a search engine). Have available lots of newspapers, seed compost and a variety of easily handled seeds such as nasturtium or broad bean.

Instructions

Some supervision may be needed to create the paper pot. Children can then add seed compost and seeds to take home.

Comments

The activity gives you the opportunity to discuss the topic of growing with the children and they enjoy having something to take away.



Sheep on a stick

Materials required

This activity needs a lot of “assembly” of materials and preparation in advance. You will need some scoured sheep’s wool from various breeds (or shredded paper if you cannot source wool), a template sheep shape – cut out lots on thin card; cut out shapes from black card for head and ears, pipe cleaners cut in half, eyes, glue, tape and lolly sticks – all available from craft stores.

Instructions

Some adult supervision is necessary. Children stick the sheep’s head to its body and its ears to the top of its head at either side. Using tape behind the ears they add twisted pipe cleaners for horns. Children stick wool or shredded paper onto the body but not the head. Using some lengths of wool they make some legs; tie the strands of wool together in a knot to make the sheep’s feet. Add the eyes and a lolly stick by which to hold the sheep!

Comments

This activity can produce a very attractive “sheep” for the children to take away.



Hay hats

Materials required

Bales of hay, small balls of wool, scissors and cut flowers or other decorations.

Instructions

Pull out a bundle of strands of hay. One person holds the end still while the other twists round and round to make a “rope” of hay, long enough to form a circle to fit a child’s head. Wind coloured wool around the length of hay to provide stability. “Fit” the circle and tie to the correct size with wool. Then add cut flowers or other decoration to complete the hay hat/

Comments

This activity requires a few practice sessions in advance and adult supervision is required. The end result is simple and very effective!

