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Bridging the Gap between KG2 and Grade One Activity Kit

A project presented to the Faculty of

The Education Department

In partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Arts in Education

Emphasis: Professional Development

By

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Under the direction of

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February, 2010

Lebanese American University

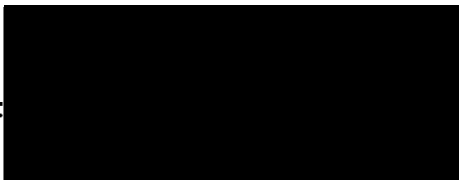
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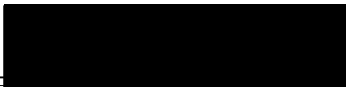
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Bridging the Gap between KG2 and Grade One Teaching Kit


Date submitted: February, 2010

Education Department

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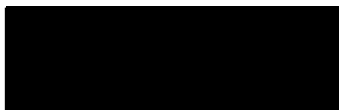
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my work to:

My mom who gave me heaps of heaven support.

The one whom my love journey started with the beginning of my graduate studies, and who is always the source of my inspiration and strength, my dearest husband.

My father and sisters, who were always patient with me

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks and appreciation are presented to Dr. Rima Bahous who is the ice breaker of every difficult moment, and who turns hard tasks into enjoyable ones. I would also like to thank my second reader Dr. Leila Harmoush for the help and support that were presented through her smooth comments and feedback. Unique thanks from the bottom of my heart to Mrs. Aida Ghandour, whom I am really in debt to her kindness and encouragement. I also owe the great gratitude to my father and sisters who overwhelmed me with their patience. Tons of thanks to my life partner who is always standing by my side and holding me up. Finally, and above all, thank you God for giving me physical and mental health to complete this work.

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ABSTRACT

Learning activities are recommended in all grade levels to facilitate the learning and teaching process. Children in the preschool and elementary stages learn most through activities where all their senses are engaged. These activities are major components of each school day in the preschool stage. However, they decrease gradually when students pass from KG2 to grade one, where these activities are substituted by drill and practice worksheets. The following work presents a kit that consists of a variety of learning activities for grade one that will bridge the gap that exists between KG2 and grade one. This kit will offer a series of different learning activities of grade one school subjects and is designed on the basis of the Lebanese academic year which consists of three trimesters. The kit will be divided into three parts each one will be reflecting a trimester and consists of a series of interrelated activities for grade one subject matters: English language Arts, Mathematics, Music, and Art. When grade one teachers resort to this kit, first graders will feel more comfortable in their class, especially that they will be doing activities they used to enjoy a lot during the preschool period, and at the same time they will be learning away from the drill and practice worksheets and practice books.

CHAPTER I

Introduction:

Daily challenges may face grade one teachers when interacting in classrooms with their students throughout the school days. The shift from KG2 to grade one is a critical issue for both students in adapting to a different learning environment and to teachers in redirecting their students in their classes.

First graders always find it hard to accommodate with elementary disciplines and school life. Throughout the preschool period, children live flexible and interesting school days. Learning happens through playing in a rich environment where children use their senses and all their skills to learn. Nursery rhymes, physical, hands-on, and integrated thematic activities are essential components of any preschool curriculum. In early childhood years, integration of teaching subjects take place as a part of theme based learning. The classroom teacher selects a central idea and the learning activities in order to teach them (Krogh & Slentz, 2001).

Berger (2004) found that students have difficult times making the connection between the concept they have acquired and its application to something else. In order to solve this problem, Berger, developed a series of games and activities to help students apply the concepts learned to the society and culture they are living in. Berger also views educational games and activities as an opportunity that involves the whole class and leads to discussion period. When students play educational games and apply activities, they become totally involved in them and the classroom turns to be full of energy (Berger, 2004).

Moreover, when designing learning activities teachers should take into consideration different aspects such as deriving these activities from real objects and situations of the child's world. Teachers also have to involve students in all aspects of the activity, such as preparing and arranging the materials if the activity is simple. Another aspect that should be taken into account is providing a well planned schedule for the learning activities. Learning activities should be selected and planned according to the students' readiness and interest (Warten & Furfey, 1978). In general, learning activities need to achieve certain goals. They have to stimulate intellectual development of the students. They also have to help students develop physically, mentally, and socially.

One major characteristic of the learning activities is that they have to be developmentally appropriate and flexible in a way that the child will be able to practice them (Warten & Furfey, 1978).

However, these components turn to be complimentary ones in grade one curriculum. In grade one, students tend to follow a systematic daily schedule where they find themselves suddenly overwhelmed by a variety of school subjects where the different activities that were mentioned above play a minor role and the drill and practice worksheets occupy the majority of their work.

Furthermore, most Lebanese schools follow foreign curricula that are geared toward the west. Needless to say that these curricula are superior to the Lebanese ones; nevertheless, they don't always fit the Lebanese culture and society. Different concepts and activities are delivered in the western spirit that makes it difficult to teachers to implement in Lebanese schools or even accommodate them.

In most Lebanese schools, the main concern of the school district is to finalize the yearly school curriculum to any grade level. This heavy burden that lies on the teachers to always follow up with the assigned curricula and exams, also lies on the students and lessens conducting different classrooms activities for the students. Therefore, the concept of "Learning is Fun" that is spread out in the preschool period starts to vanish. Students in grade one become indulged in the cycle of drill and practice work sheets, and exams.

The Lebanese Culture

Teachers' beliefs and values mediate between culture and classroom, and consequently form a link between cultural contexts and students' learning experience (Ireson, 2008). Therefore, the idea of designing a Lebanese activity kit for first graders is born due to the above facts. There is a need to have a teacher's kit for grade one and homeroom teachers in Lebanese schools. This kit will be schemed in a way to fill in the gaps that exist between KG2 and grade one, and will be geared toward the Middle East and particularly the Lebanese culture and society.

If we take a quick look at Lebanon's history, we can find that since the 1920's the Lebanese have developed divergent ideas regarding the identity and role of the Lebanese polity (Dagher, 2000). Maronite Christians view Lebanon as a separate identity from the Arab neighborhood; whereas Muslims view Lebanon as inseparable part of the Arab world (Salibi, 1988; Harris; 2006). Therefore, Christians and Muslims disagree on major concepts such as Arabity, Pluralsim, and cultural differences (Dagher, 2000). Moreover, the Muslims and Christians of Lebanon did not exhibit a common identity neither in 1920 when the Greater Lebanon was created (Harris, 2006), nor in 1943 when the Lebanese republic gained it's

their identities and cognitive functioning (Bismilla, Chow, Cohen, Cummins, Giampapa, Leoni, Sandhu, Sastri 2005). Also religious symbols are part of everyday classroom. Students usually use verbal and non verbal expressions that typify their cultural backgrounds (Block & Lemish 2005). Christian students often make the sign of cross before taking an examination, Muslim students often say "Allah Akbar" when hearing the prayer from the mosque. Moreover, in many cases the geographical location of a Lebanese school indicates the religion to which it subscribes. Most schools in Lebanon follow either the French baccalaureate model of the curriculum or align themselves with the American high school system. However, other schools adopt a mixture of both the national Lebanese curriculum and their own curriculum (Akl, 2007). The Lebanese educational system consists of various components. These components are the foundation of the school system and its cultural implications, the formal and the hidden curriculum, the infrastructure of the Lebanese university and their affiliations with a cultural context, and the political and religious events that take place within the educational settings. Lebanon is characterized by collectivist cultural values, where the interest of a group prevails over the interest of the individual (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005). In Lebanon, there is no single dominant faction who promotes the development of the central Lebanese identity (Akl, 2007). In collectivist culture students tend to speak up in class only when sanctioned in groups, students from different ethnic backgrounds often form subgroups in class, they also form the same ethnic background as the teacher or other school officials tend to expect preferential treatment. Moreover, the educational setting in a collectivist culture tends to have the following features. Authorities reside with the teacher, the parent child inequality is perpetuated by a teacher student inequality, the educational process is teacher centered, teacher always initiates all

communications in classrooms, and teachers are never publicly criticized and contradicted (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Furthermore, the Lebanese culture is influenced by religion and family values (Akl, 2007). It also admires education and the desire to learn. In the Lebanese culture, parental influence has a heavy impact on the students' education. Family, parental expectations, roles and responsibilities are of major importance of the Lebanese students (Kibbe, 1995). Lebanese parents always impose some cultural constraints on their children especially when they choose their future careers. The prestige of professional identity and the desire for high income are two major elements that Lebanese students' take into account when pursuing their education. In the Lebanese culture, these two elements meet the definition of success (Kibbe, 1995). Moreover, the Lebanese culture and society award titles to certain professionals. In Lebanon, teachers have power and prestige, and they are respected by the Lebanese students and parents. Teachers are positioned in front of the classroom so that they can be seen by all of the students. They also have a prepared agenda for each school day. They lecture and distribute the materials related to the work of each day, answer questions related to the subject matter, and permit no students to leave the classrooms. Furthermore, students are expected to memorize most of the materials presented to them and not encouraged to creatively apply the knowledge (Kibbe, 1995). Teachers' control make students often feel uncomfortable in class, they are also under pressure, and they don't participate by expressing their ideas. They also lose out on learning and new experiences (Kibbe, 1995). Although many schools are trying to reduce teachers' authority and their traditional teaching style, it is still widely spread in Lebanon. In addition, in Lebanon, students have to pass examinations in order to step up into the next level and there are no second chances (Lebanese Curriculum 1995).

Importance of Cultural Related Activities

Recent researches have indicated that culture plays an important role in students' outside school experiences and that students show a broad range of literary skills while experiencing culture. Therefore, teachers have to develop an enhanced knowledge about their students' culture. When literacy skills were involved with culture, teachers developed a better understanding about the importance of making stronger home-school connection for student literacy learning at school (Hong Xu, 2002).

Starting from this fact, I found that shedding lights on cultural activities will enhance students' learning process especially that the main goal of education is to prepare students to be long life learners. And since culture is an integral part of us, cultural aspects should be taken into consideration whenever designing learning activities to facilitate the learning process.

The following part will give a quick glance about the main leaders of the field of activity planning in different teaching subjects: language arts, mathematics, art, and music. It will also highlight the major features of grade one and KG2 Lebanese curriculum and the gap that exists between these curricula.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

What is more rewarding than watching our students enjoying learning through different learning activities? Learning activities are recommended as solutions to facilitate the learning process in all school subjects. Learning activities applied in elementary classes enhances students skills. When I say activities this includes language arts, mathematics, art, and music activities. Learning activities are means of educating students. Participating in such activities help students to learn and practice personal and leadership skills necessary for their later success as citizens (Klesse, 2004).

Planning activities begin with each student. Since each student is unique and has his or her way of responding, the teacher needs to know their likes, and be aware of their level of development, strengths, and abilities (Mayesky, 1995).

Designing learning activities requires certain interactions making them more likely to occur (Ireson 2008) and various elements should be taken into account. These activities should be in alignment with the school's philosophy, meet students' needs, and designed to develop students' skills (Klesse, 2004). Edward and Mercer stated that learning activities encourage student teacher interaction through the IRE strategy (initiation, reply, evaluation) (Edwards & Mercer, 1987). Creative activities always provide opportunities for discussions. Moreover, activities help students to learn through feedback and evaluation, develop their abilities, provide physical, emotional, intellectual, and social involvement, and centered in the purpose of education (Klesse, 2004). Activities done by students help them to be involved in their school and help them also to make positive lifestyle choices through social influence (Klesse, 2004).

McNeal found that the highest portion of students participate in sports activities 56 percent, academic activities 36 percent, and fine arts activities 28 percent (McNeal Jr., 1998).

Student activity programs are authentic and provide experiences that classroom learning does not provide. For example and according to Buss (1998) athletic and sports related activities develop physical fitness and interpersonal understanding. Speech, art, and drama give opportunities for emotional development, creative expression, and self realization (Buss, 1998).

Sherill (1998) stated that student's activities are determined by the school curriculum. Students' activities join the mainstream of school activities when the latter realize that they have to create a fully integrated curriculum that crosses the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines (Sherill, 1998).

The term "activities" refers to specific phenomena occurring in the classrooms, the structures underlying these are more general and applicable across multiple contexts (Palak & Walls 2009). Moreover, activities are also referred to as 'structures' which are identified as a set of classroom activities and interactions that have characteristics roles for participants, rules, patterns of behaviors, and recognizable material and discursive practices associated with them (Palak & Walls 2009). Polman (2004) views activity structures functioning on both classroom and school levels and beyond. Activity structures can be modified to accommodate another curriculum area, but the adaptation must involve choices "along the dimensions of act (what) and agency (how) (Polman, 2004).

Lebanese Curriculum

After examining the Lebanese official English language curriculum that is authorized by the Center for Educational Research and Development and the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, it revealed that the new English curriculum aims at integrating language and content in the English as a foreign language classroom. Moreover, it aims at developing three levels of English language proficiency that are social interaction, academic purposes, and socio-cultural development. The above levels are best achieved through cooperative learning, that constitutes a series of pro-social methods such as jigsaw, group investigation, information gap, mixer review, and round table, which requires group work, interaction, positive interdependence, individual accountability, and team reward (Lebanese English Language Curriculum, 1997).

As to the skills needed to be developed while teaching English as a foreign language, it includes listening, speaking, writing, and reading. All of these skills require pre and post stages to reach the desirable goals of teaching English. The content based approach adopted by the new Lebanese English language curriculum encompassed a variety of theme based packages of relevant, authentic, and exploitable instructional materials. Therefore, the materials selected are developmentally appropriate and include a good range of language functions and structures (Lebanese English Language Curriculum, 1997).

Moreover, classroom activities will involve hands-on performance tasks, brainstorming in groups, physical involvement, discussions, developing semantic maps, etc. To help students develop learning strategies, increase retention, activate prior learning, and organize ideas logically, a special emphasis is based on the use of graphic organizers. Using these aids and activities is to facilitate communication and comprehension.

Evaluation also is considered an integral part of the learning and teaching process. It is a continuous operation that employs different formal and informal tools of assessment for obtaining information about a student's proficiency level. Evaluation can take different forms such as tests, peer and self evaluation, portfolios, observations, and interviews (Lebanese English Language Curriculum, 1997).

Grade One and KG 2 Lebanese Curricula and the gap that exists

In grade one, the Lebanese official curriculum requires teaching nine subjects that are: Arabic language, a foreign language (either English or French), Mathematics, Science, physical education, Music, Art, Civil Education, and geography. Each subject is delivered through textbooks (except for Art, Music, and physical education), and some subjects require more than one textbook especially the language textbooks. Consequently, students own about eight books in addition to copybooks for each subject that are determined by the teachers and vary in number from one school to another. This amount of learning materials that grade one students are overwhelmed with, creates a contradictory learning environment that students used to live in KG2 and which was free from all the constraints that textbooks pose.

When I investigated grade one textbooks, I found out that each practice book involves a series of practice sheets that require from students to match, circle, complete sentences etc. There is little emphasis on activities that involve students' psychomotor skills.

The Lebanese KG2 curriculum is presented in two folders one for the Arabic language and the other is the foreign language. These folders include a series of sheets relevant to the various learning fields needed to be learned in this period. The sheets of both languages complement each other, and they are based on different language skills, mathematics, art, etc.

Moreover, the folders are always kept at school. Every day, the teacher distributes the necessary sheets needed to be accomplished throughout the day. Therefore, students spend a full year free from textbooks.

The daily schedule in the preschool period starts with the arrival time which provides the children with the opportunity to settle into the rhythm of the day and start playing with toys and games. Then comes the outdoor or indoor activity time where students can learn and learn and play. After that comes the lunchtime part. Finally, comes the part of the day where teachers end it and prepare the children for the following day (Krogh & Slentz, 2001).

When the curriculum is planned for the preschool period, it generally avoids focusing on the subject disciplines, where as the opposite happens in the primary grades (Krogh & Slentz, 2001). Grade one students have less freedom to move in their classes, and explore different centers in the class or even assemble towers of block, and finally choosing ways to interact with one another and materials. In elementary grades, a passerby is less likely to hear different rhymes, hammers banging, and loud laughter (Kempton, 2008).

In elementary grades, teachers shift to focus on academics, therefore children are impoverished from social, emotional, and creative life that are important aspects of child's development (Kempton, 2008).

Activity Planning

Activities in language Arts classrooms

According to Ghoson (2003), English language textbooks have been criticized due to their limited vocabulary, simple sentence structure, emphasis on form, in addition to the limited opportunities they provide for students in strengthening their awareness of the new language and reflecting real life language situations.

Moreover, Ghosn (2003) believes that students view textbooks as an authority regarding what and how they should say the classrooms episodes. Interactions that rise from textbooks such as role playing and pair practiced tasks reveal students as parrots repeating words that are mentioned in the text rather than initiating new ideas (see also, Tomlinson, 2003).

To maintain efficacy of second language classes, they should be turned into a whole-person events, where real interaction takes place. Different activities related to children's literature generate real interaction through dialogues, literary journals, letters to the characters and others. Literary selections have been incorporated in many primary schools. Literature activities help children to go beyond word and sentence level awareness to an overall awareness that includes understanding of inferences, discourse sequence, and the ways word link (Tomlinson, 2003).

In their study, Parabikhat and Wesche (1997) found that students gained more in target vocabulary knowledge when they were taught in a learning plus condition or in an environment full of learning activities (Parabikhat & Wesche, 1997). Another study that indicates the same results was conducted by Hulstijin (2001). It showed that students' word learning was enhanced

due to cognitive elaboration of form-meaning relationships through association making and other mental activities (Hustijin, 2001). Furthermore, Laufer (2003) conducted a study with EFL students and compared vocabulary gains with gains from productive word-focused tasks. The results indicated that when a word is practiced in a productive word-focused task, its meaning has a better chance to be remembered than if it is encountered in a text or looked up in a dictionary (Laufer, 2003). Moreover, Morgan (2004) contended that vocabulary lessons should be conceptualized as a social activity where meaning-making is shaped by the complex socio-cultural dynamics of the classroom. Stein (2004) also suggests that vocabulary lessons should help learners to make choices from different possibilities offered in the classrooms. Therefore, vocabulary activities become an opportunity for learners to negotiate and reflect their identities in the class (Stein, 2004). Heath (1983) stated that gaps between home and school might be reduced if schools were to integrate a larger diversity of language practices in the curriculum, and this will help all learners to benefit from exposure to a broader range of language pattern (Heath, 1983). In addition, Vasquez, Pease- Al Varez, and Shanon, (1994), echoed Heath's ideas by calling on teachers to move beyond a narrow focus on knowledge and to recognize the broader range of languages spoken in the societies (Vasquez, Pease- Al Varez, & Shanon, 1994). This can be clearly reflected in language awareness activities where students participate in discussions about language, listen to tapes, and examine different language patterns (Dagenais, Armand, Walsh & Maraillet, 2008). To apply these activities, students have to work within groups to solve a given problem. In these situations, social interactions become prerequisites of the co-construction of the new knowledge, and students will have access to their peers language resources. Consequently, this will constitute an expanded collective language repertoire. This approach intersects with Vygotsky's theoretical perspectives of learning that highlights the

effects of society and environment on learning. Therefore, language learning in a school context involves participation in the social practice of the classroom community (Dagenais, Walsh, Armand & Maraillet 2008). Lave and Wenger (1991) stated that when students work collaboratively within a community they position themselves in different ways during the learning activities. These social networks created through social work, condition the students access to materials, social and linguistic resources that might support their learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Donato (2004) underscores the role collaboration plays in learning and mediated social learning. In his view, in order to collaboration to happen, students must participate in a meaningful activity where their interactions are significant and students can negotiate the terms of their activities. Donato also believes that when students engage in collaboration, their learning potentials improve since the group process give them the chance to co-construct new knowledge that goes beyond any knowledge possessed by a single member in isolation (Donato, 2004). Furthermore, It appears from research, that reading for example, can be enhanced through instructional intervention (Elley, 1989).

One of the major goals of teaching languages in classrooms is communication. Language has to do with the communication of ideas, feelings, and emotions among students (Murello, 2007). Social activities in the classrooms are an important factor of learning. One of the classrooms activities that enhance students' critical thinking is drama activities. Drama activities are interesting and fun, and at the same time they are effective because they deal with a variety of language aspects and communication (Murello, 2007). Drama activities provide opportunities of the language awareness in the students and it also serves several aspects of human development. Furthermore, they also offer physical and intellectual environment and they are good tools to encourage the spirit of discovery (Murello, 2007).

Activities in Mathematics Classrooms

Learning activities are not limited to one subject area, for example in mathematics, one of the cornerstones of providing best learning is describing technology tools and other resources that support teacher's work. These tools and resources are reflected through learning activities. Playing mathematical games give students the opportunities to practice various mathematical skills in an enjoyable manner. Moreover, investigating different games and activities expose them to many experiences using problem solving techniques (Freidman, 2009).

When students are actively involved in learning they become intrinsically motivated. The mathematics classroom should be a place where interesting problems are explored, and where students are given the chance to explore, and use variety of mathematical methods effectively. Cooperative groups, portfolios, class presentations, problem solving are different ways that students learn to communicate mathematics (Huetnic & Munshin, 2000).

Moreover, children benefit from learning math through creative spatial play where they are able to make decisions about shape and size when they try to make "things to fit", like for example a bed for a bear (Gifford, 2005). Edgington (1998) primary argued that children best learn from mathematics from real life experiences that are concerned with seeing math as a tool rather from unrelated mathematics activities that are offered in schools (Edgington, 1998). Daily life experiences can provide regular practice of mathematical skills such as counting the number of children standing up in line, or counting the chairs in the classroom (Gifford, 2005).

In addition to learning activities, mathematical games offer opportunities for problem solving. Research applied by Aurbery (2003) indicates that adults have significant effects on five-year old significant skills (Aurbery, 2003). Games are also meaningful and constitute real

life for children (Gifford, 2005). According to Young-Loveridge (2004), games protect children's self esteem because the power and authority of adults vanish while playing games (Young- Loverdge 2004).

In order to learn different aspects of mathematics, children need opportunities and encouragement. Children find mathematics focused activities relevant, enjoyable, and interesting (Gifford, 2005).

Activities in Art and Music Classrooms

Music should be a part for each day for children .It offers pleasure of singing songs with friends and excitement of creating ones' own dance .Music of different cultures and countries should be part of students' experiences. When students are introduced to folksongs and dances from around the world, this expands their interests in other people and countries. Moreover, when music is integrated in language learning, students' vocabulary is expanded. The more students sing, the better they speak, read, and listen (Blakley, Blaue, Brady, Streibert, Zavitkovsky, & Zavitkovsky, 2001).

Berke and Colwell (2004) stated the importance of integrating the arts into the core curriculum (Berke & Colwell 2004). Music is integrated in elementary classrooms, as an illustration to the subject matter, a break from other subjects, or as background music. Moreover, teachers frequently use music in their classes to support other academic subject areas. It also used to serve other goals such as classroom management and mood (Berke & Colwell 2004). Ericson & Scjuliebo (1998) found that music is one of the ways to enhance reading comprehension by having children read print while singing (cited in Gromko 2005). Music instruction that teaches children to analyze a simple song into its pattern would develop their

ability to segment words into phonemes. Music experiences can provide children with the opportunity to hear and learn about music from different cultures, express feelings and emotions in songs, experience in playing simple instruments, and identify some musical concepts and terms (Mayesky, 1995).

In addition to teaching music, art also plays an important role in children's education. Recent research has found that art is a satisfying and fulfilling subject for children. Art is defined as motivating and productive activity. It is also a subject that requires demanding thinking as well as practical activities. Moreover, children view art as a pleasurable, important, and serious activity. It offers children knowledge, skills, and opportunities to express themselves. In addition, art activities develop intellectual and aesthetic awareness and design skills that are useful in everyday life and employment and also worthwhile in them (Cox, Watts, Graham, Herne, & McAullife, 2007).

Art includes different processes such as drawing, painting, three dimensional work, textiles and collage (Cox et al. 2007). Drawing for example is used mainly as a low level activity to keep children busy (Anning, 1999). Drawing also functions as a tool for problem solving, and children need to realize its potentials to learn (Anning 1999). There are many theories that deal with children's art. While the cognitive theory believes that children draw what they know, the psychoanalytic theory claims that children's drawing is a reflection of their emotions and feelings (Mayesky, 1995). As to Piaget, he relates children's art to their ability to understand the permanent existence of objects. On the other hand, the perceptual delineation theory believes that children's drawing are due to several factors such as children's readiness, their psychological environment, how they handle information, and how they demonstrate their abilities in

manipulating art materials (Mayesky, 1995). All art programs help children in sensory-motor learning through the use of their bodies, senses and minds. When children involve all their senses in art activities, this will provide them with complete learning experiences. Finally, art helps students in developing their mental attitude in all subject areas (Mayesky, 1995).

All in all, all learning activities should be flexible and adapted to various levels and to all students' needs and interests. Different modification to learning activities may exist so that they can be used in different environments. Simple directions, variety of illustrations, inexpensive materials, simple games and puppet patterns may aid in the preparation of any learning activity (Kinghorn, 1975).

CHAPTER III

Rationale for designing this kit

The reasons behind designing this kit are to break the ice and take the initiative to decrease the strict Lebanese educational system. It will be called "Bridging the Gap between KG2 and Grade One". It will be designed on the basis of the Lebanese academic year which consists of nine months starting from October and ending in June. Each month of the academic year will include a variety of activities derived from the Lebanese culture. This kit will reflect a series of interrelated activities for grade one subject matters: English language Arts, Mathematics, Music, and Art. As a whole, each month will involve four different activities related to the subject matters mentioned above. Each week, a learning period will be scheduled particularly to teach activities from this kit. Each activity will be achieved within one period (between 45 to 55 minutes), where students will be actively engaged in the learning process, and at the same time enjoying learning the way they used to enjoy during the preschool period. The Lebanese ministry of education recommends for cycle one students two physical education periods, one art period and one music period (Lebanese Curriculum, 1995). When this activity period will be added to the weekly schedule of the students, I think students will be attending a sufficient number of activity periods throughout the whole week. It is preferable that homeroom teachers use this kit in their classes since they are actively involved with grade one curricula.

Two main features characterize designing these activities. First of all, they will be away from the concept of "drill to kill" and they will nourish students' environment and reestablish the idea of "learning is fun" that starts to disappear by the dominance of worksheets. All the activities in this kit are derived from grade one prerequisites of major subject matters.

Furthermore, it will provide enjoyable and enriching activities and at the same time will allow students to increase their knowledge in different subject matter concepts by developing literacy, mathematical, music, and artistic skills.

Another important feature of this activity Kit is that all the materials that are used to implement the activities are cheap and accessible. They are indispensable materials and offered excessively at any school. They are also prepared by the teachers and the students themselves. Therefore, students do not only participate in the learning activities, but also participate in their preparations. In addition, a step by step procedure is provided along with each activity; therefore, this will add more flexibility and requires no planning efforts for the teachers.

When teachers use this kit with first graders, students will feel comfortable, for it is correlated with the Lebanese context. Collaboration and interaction will be highly ensured and students will be offered authentic learning activities. The emergence of such a kit will offer them opportunities to adapt faster to the “more rigid” environment of grade one.

On the other hand, teachers will also be benefitting from this kit. A collection of readymade different activities for homeroom teachers saves both their time and effort especially that teachers are always overloaded with different duties throughout performing their profession.

As a final thought prior designing this kit, I hope that the kit will ensure its efficacy regarding filling the gap that exists between grade one and KG2 and provides enriching and interesting learning and teaching experiences for both teachers and students.

Before presenting the Kit content, I would like to state that my teaching experience and observations in kindergarten and grade one classes, were the basic pillars that helped me to prepare the following kit. I also reviewed a variety of teachers' textbooks, educational magazines such as the mailbox box magazine which produces each month a variety of educational activities from different teaching subject matters for kindergarten and cycle one students. Moreover, the LAU library is enriched with tons of books for teaching activities for different authors such as Mayesky, Klesse, and Sherill. However, the challenge was to modify and accommodate these activities in a way or another that match the main goal of this Kit which is to supply a variety of teaching activities that are derived from the Lebanese culture.

The Kit

October

Art:

A Cherry Tree for all Months:

At the beginning of the school year, students need to know the months of the academic year they are enrolled in. This activity will be an interesting way to introduce this concept that forms a representation of the student academic year. It will show the various events this year includes by creating a cherry tree. Why cherries? Cherries are popular fruits in Lebanon, and they ripen in June. This activity will show the months that compose the academic year, the major events that will pass throughout it, and the life cycle of the cherry tree.

Materials:

Construction papers, colored cardboards, white cotton, crayons, pink tissue, glue.

Procedure:

The teacher will draw a one meter long bare tree on construction paper.

Let students cut out this tree, by taking turns.

The teacher will divide the tree into nine equal parts; each part represents a month and will be demonstrated as the following:

Part One: October, students will cut out and paste leaves for the tree, using red, orange, brown, and yellow cardboards, therefore representing the fall season.

Part Two: November, this month includes the Independence Day, students draw the Lebanese flag on a piece of paper, (5cm length, and 2cm width), and they color it and paste it on the tree's branches.

Part Three: December, the tree is naked now due to winter; students make cotton balls and paste them on the tree branches.

Part Four: January, it is still winter time in Lebanon, children make three snowmen, with a different –color scarf, and they paste them next to the tree log.

Part Five: February, it is the love month. Children cut out red hearts, and write inside the heart names of people they love, (mom, dad, sister, brother, friend), the hearts are then pasted on the tree branches.

Part Six: March: it is springtime, students add in this part fluffy clouds made out of cotton, they also cut out green caterpillars and they add them to the tree branches. They also draw buds on the trees using white and pink crayons.

Part Seven: April: the students cut out as many as green leaves, and they add them to the tree, they also draw a rainbow using crayons.

Part Eight: May: out of pink tissue, children form blossoms, and add them to the tree; they also cut out colored birds, and cover the tree with them.

Part Nine: Cherry ripens in this month; children fill out the tree with pieces of red cherries.

Language arts:

Mitten Match Activity (this activity is done both by the teachers and students)

At the beginning of the school year, students and the classroom teachers need to break the ice and get familiar with each other. The following activity will help in breaking the ice and introducing classmates to each other.

Materials: colored cutout mittens, photos of students and teachers, glue.

Procedures:

Teachers provide students with a cut out mitten. Students have to trace this mitten and to cut out two other ones.

On one of the mittens, the students write their names and family names. On the other mitten they paste their photos.

Teachers divide the mittens into two groups, one group that has the names and the other has the students' photos and then scrambles them.

Each student selects a photo mitten and starts looking for its owner.

When the student matches the photo mitten with its owner, the latter introduces himself or herself so that the other student will be able to recognize the name of the new friend and find out the mitten that represents the name.

At the end, each student will be having the mittens of another classmate, he or she presents it to its owner.

Music:

Brushing Melody Activity:

One of the major concerns of parents and teachers is personal hygiene. The most effective way to teach students how to take care of their hygiene is through authentic experiences. The following is a song that aims at helping students to take care of their teeth.

Materials:

Sticks, white cardboards, glue.

On white cardboards, students trace and cut out a tooth drawing provided by the teacher.

Each student adds to his or her tooth face parts by drawing them the way they like.

Students paste their tooth on the stick having at the end a tooth puppet.

When the puppet is ready students will be singing the following rhyme following the tune of

Row, Row, Row your boat.

Brush, brush, brush us please.

Brush us every day.

Brush, brush, brush us please.

To fight that tooth decay.

Rinse, rinse, rinse us please.

Rinse us every day.

Rinse, rinse, rinse us please.

To fight that tooth decay.

Eat, eat, and eat good foods

Too keep us mighty strong.

Eat, eat, and eat good foods

And we'll last very long.

Math:

Falling for Leaves Activities

Materials: leaves cut outs, tree, a die.

At the beginning of the school year, students need to start reinforcing their mathematical skills especially the counting skills. This activity will provide an enjoyable opportunity to practice counting and at the same time will be reflecting the fall season.

Teacher presents a tree log with bare branches. Students cut out leaves of different fall colors, orange yellow, brown, and red. They paste these leaves on the naked tree.

Have each student roll the die, count the dots and remove the corresponding number of leaves from the tree. Students repeat this activity until the tree becomes naked.

November

Art:

Cedars Clothespin:

To celebrate The Independence Day on the students own way, they will be making a clothespin that represents the Lebanese cedar.

Materials:

Green cardboards, clothespins, adhesive, glue.

Procedure:

Prior to this session, teachers color the clothespin with green.

Teachers will provide students with a picture of a cedar. Each student will trace and cut out a green cedar using cardboards.

Teachers cover the cedars each student has done with an adhesive.

Teachers demonstrate how to paste the cedar on the clothespin, and then each student will follow teacher's demonstration to prepare the clothespin.

The pins are ready now for the students to hang on their shirts.

Music:

This month does not only include the Independence Day event, it also involves the Flag Day. The following section offers a short song about the Lebanese flag. Prior to introducing this song and to facilitate memorizing this poem, students perform the following simple activity.

Materials: copies of black and white Lebanese flag, crayons, straws, glue.

Procedure:

Teacher distributes copies of the Lebanese flag and holds on a discussion about its colors.

After the discussion, the teacher asks students to color the flag, and then demonstrates how to paste the straw on the flag's side to be able to wave the flag.

Starting waving the flags, the teacher and the students start singing the following song:

Wave a little flag

Red, white, and green

Our country belongs to you and me

So all together we can say happy Independence Day.

Language Arts:

A book Jacket Activity

This activity will help students to understand the reading process and its importance in addition to some parts of the narrative elements.

Materials:

A4 papers, crayons.

Procedure:

At the beginning of the school year, students need to realize the importance of reading stories. Due to this reason, teachers need to emphasize this concept by taking the students to the school library and letting each one select a book of his or her interest.

Teachers hold a discussion with students about the major parts of a book: cover, title, author, illustrators, and genre.

Teachers display a sample of a book jacket and show its uses to students, then do a sample in front of the class following these steps:

Lay out the A4 paper on the desk, then place the book on it, spine down on the top of the paper and fold each end around the cover.

Now it's time for students to design and illustrate their own book jackets.

Each book jacket should include the title of the story students have chosen, author, genre, characters, setting.

Math:

Adding Stars activity:

The goal of this activity is to help students to practice addition through manipulation.

Materials: Leaves, sentence strips, stars, dark blue cardboard, glue, numbers.

Procedure:

Teachers present a collection of golden stars made out of cardboards to students, an empty dark blue cardboard that stands for the sky, and an addition equation written on a sentence strip, number cards, and gives the directions of this activity.

Each student has to choose a problem strip, and then paste the stars on the dark blue cardboard according to the addends in the problem. For example, if a child has chosen the strip $3+1=$, he or she has to choose first 3 stars and then 1 star and paste them on the cardboard. Then, they will count the total number of stars and select the strip that shows the correct sum.

At the end of the activity, the dark blue cardboard will look like a starry night made by students.

December

Art:

My Vacation Agenda Activity:

In this month winter starts in Lebanon, this month also includes a long vacation that includes different holidays and at the same time this vacation is also considered a break after three consecutive months of school days. The following art activity I would like to introduce here represents this season, and helps students to organize their time during the spring vacation, and will be also done prior the vacation.

Materials: white cardboards, buttons, snowflakes cutouts, crayons, construction papers.

Procedure:

Each student cuts out an oval shape that stands for the snowman's body, and a circle shape for its head. They decorate and color their snowman, the way they like.

Teachers will distribute to each student a snowflake of a 6 cm diameter, they will trace it and cut out several ones (the number of the flakes should match the number of the vacation days). On the snowflakes, students will write the name of the day, and their plans regarding this days. For instance, if the vacation is ten days, there will be ten snowflakes, each of which represents a day and the students' plan as shown in the following example: Monday : I will start my math homework, and go to my grandparents.

After the students finish writing their plans, they paste the snowman and the snowflakes on a large construction paper.

When this activity is done, students have to hang it in their bedrooms that will stand as an organizer for them.

Language Arts:

Give us a Hand Activity:

This activity will be a reflection of students' manners and characteristics.

Materials: colored construction paper, paper scraps, crayons, scissors, pencils, black construction paper.

Have each student trace his or her hand on the colored construction paper and cut it out.

Ask students to write descriptive words such about themselves (such as happy, smart, friendly) on each of the paper fingers.

Let students glue the hand on the black construction paper.

Provide students with a colored construction rectangular cut out that stands for a sleeve, and demonstrate how to glue it below the hand wrist.

Let students decorate their sleeves using paper scraps.

Finally, invite students to share their descriptive hand with their classmates, and then display students' hands on the bulletin board.

Music:

Where is the bell? Activity:

This is really a pleasurable activity where students will enjoy playing this game, and at the same time they will be improving their auditory discrimination.

Materials: a small bell

Procedure:

Let students sit in a circle.

Have one student leave the room.

Give one of the students who are sitting in a circle the small bell that can be easily hidden in his hand.

Call the children who left the room to reenter it, and ask all the present children to shake their fists above their heads.

The student has to guess who is hiding the bell.

If the children get used to the game, use more than one bell.

Math:

Apple Seeds Counting Book:

The following activity will help students develop their counting skills.

Materials: apples, newspapers, red, yellow, or green paint, markers, paper fasteners, staples.

Procedure;

Hold a discussion about apples: their shapes, taste, what they include inside.

Cut the four apples, and let students count the number of seeds found in each apple.

Let students realize that apples contain varying number of seeds and announce that they will now create their own seed counting book.

Distribute the booklet the teacher prepares prior to class from paper fasteners.

To keep the classroom clean, the teacher covers the desks with news papers.

Demonstrate how to dip an apple into the paint, blot it on the paper towel, and stamp it on the paper.

Have students make 12 apple prints with different colors on each page.

When the paint is dry, let students draw seeds on the apples, starting from page one, they have to draw one seed on the first apple, then two seeds on the second apple presented in the second page and so on. Under each apple, they write the number of its seeds using markers. At the end, the booklet will be filled out with apples, seeds, and corresponding number for the seeds from 1-12.

January

Art:

New Year's Wish Mural:

In this activity students will welcome the New Year by drawing their own representations of it. The mural will be divided into different parts. Each student will draw his or her wishes on a part of the mural.

Materials:

Construction paper, crayons.

The construction paper will be about two meters long, and 50 cm width. Using a pencil the teacher will divide this mural into equal parts according to the number of students participating in this activity. Using crayons, students will draw and write their wishes for the New Year on their parts on the mural.

Language Arts:

Alphabet Notebook Activity:

After the first trimester of the school, grade one students' written skills should have been improved after the passage of three months. It is time for familiarizing students with the uses of dictionaries. Each student will create his or her own notebook that stands as a mini dictionary for them.

Materials: notebooks, pencils.

Procedure:

Provide each student with a spiral notebook.

The teacher divides the book into 26 equal parts each part represents an alphabetical letter.

Students will alphabetize each part, students will write letter 'A' on the first part.

On the first page of the notebook, have each student write his or her name and the grade level.

As a starting activity, encourage students to enter a variety of familiar and high frequency words such as number words, color words, vocabulary words, days of the week, and science words.

Demonstrate how to enter these words in alphabetical order, the words that starts with letter "A" for example are written in the "A" part and so on.

Tell students that this is just an initial step to start using this notebook; and that they will be using this notebook throughout the school year, whenever they learn a new word; they add it to their dictionary.

Music:

Mime and Music:

This activity will help students extend their creativity and expend their energy.

Materials: tape recorder, flash cards

Procedure:

On flash cards, the teacher writes different words for objects, actions, sensations, and emotions.

The teacher plays the music for a minute, and then displays a flash card, where students read it and do whatever movements the words and music suggests to them.

Math:

Dig into Sand Activity:

The following activity reinforces students' counting skills.

Materials: plastic coins, plastic dish tub, play sand, papers, crayons.

Procedure:

Display a big plastic tub full of sand and bury as much coins as u can inside it.

Let students search for coins in the sand.

Give students five minutes only to find the coins.

When they are done, each student will count the number of coins he or she has collected and place the coins they collected under the white papers distributed by the teacher and make rubbings.

Finally, ask students to count the coins and write the total value next to their rubbings.

February

Art:

Valentine's Day is getting popular year after year in Lebanon. Although many schools are against this day, the idea from designing this activity is to show that love is not only limited to lovers, it could be a family, a mother, a friend, and a teacher's love.

Materials:

Toothpicks, clay, green aluminum strings, birds and hearts, cut outs.

Procedure:

Each student will form a ball out of brown clay; this will be the base of the tree.

Students will add the aluminum strings to their tree with the help of their teachers.

On the top of each string, students will cut out hearts, and birds from colored cardboards.

In each cut-out shape, they will write the name of the person that they love and paste it on the top of the tree branch.

The tree will end up with a collection of hearts and birds that represent the students' dearest persons.

Language Arts:

“Spider Main-ia” Activity:

After the passage of five months from the school year, grade one students are now familiar with story elements and different reading skills. This activity will provide an opportunity for students to practice finding out the main ideas and details from a story.

Materials: short story, index card, yarn.

Procedure:

The teacher reads a short story for the students, and then distributes index cards them.

Have each student write a detail he or she remembers about the story.

Then have all students sit together in a circle putting their cards in front of them.

Let each student paste one end of the yarn on their index card and extend the opposite end of the yarn toward the center of the circle.

Let students share the details of the story they wrote on their index cards with each other and determine the main idea of the story.

The teacher then writes the main idea the students determined on an index card and place it in the center of the circle, connecting it to the length of the yarn. When the spider web is ready, the teacher has to draw the students' attention to visualize how details are related and support the main idea of the story.

Music:

February, the month of love, strikes again, but this time with music. The following activity will help students accept others, and even create new friendships among grade one students.

Musical Hugs:

Materials: Tape recorder.

Procedure:

Take students to the gym hall or the playground.

Tell them they are going to listen to different rhymes and songs they are familiar with; when the music stops everyone hugs someone nearby, if several students are close together they can have a group hug.

Those who remain without a partner will be discarded from the game.

The same steps will be repeated until one couple or group remains till the end.

The teacher announces the winners, and repeats the activity, whenever needed.

Math:

Seed Sort:

This activity will help students to discriminate between oval and round shapes and improve their classification skills.

Materials: lentil seeds, peas, corn seeds, apple seeds, glue, white papers.

Procedure:

Give each student a small bag filled with different kinds of seeds that were mentioned above.

Distribute to students white papers.

Let them examine the seeds in the bags and draw on the paper a column with the two headings:
oval seeds, round seeds.

Under the correct column, students paste the seeds.

Finally, display students work on the bulletin boards.

March

Art:

“I love mom” key Holder Activity:

A major goal of this activity is to give mothers with portable souvenirs that can be carried in all their days out, therefore breaking all the traditional souvenirs that are designed for this occasion such as a photo frame or a card.

Materials:

Colored beads, silver beads with the letters (I- L-O-V-E-Y-U-M), strings, key holders.

Each student will be choosing the color of the beads he or she would like to make his or her key holder, then they will also choose the letter beads that make the following sentence: I love you mom.

The teacher will provide students with strings, they will first insert about six colored beads, then they will insert the letter beads following the sequence of the sentence, “I Love You Mom”.

Finally, they will insert another six colored beads. At the end, the teacher will tie the end of the bead.

The string will be attached then to the key holders and ready to be dedicated to the students’ loveliest person in the world.

Language Arts:

Dandelion Photo Pencil Pointer Activity:

In March, Lebanon also celebrates Child's Day. To let children celebrate this occasion on their own way students will create their own pencil pointer using their own photos.

Materials:

Photos of each student, glue, yellow and white cardboards, scissors, green pencils.

Procedure:

Let students trace a milk jug lid on a white or yellow cardboard.

Let students cut out the circle and then fringe cut along the edges.

In the center of each cutout, children paste their photos on both sides.

Glue both cutouts to each side of the eraser of the sharpened green pencil.

Encourage and show students how to use it while reading.

Music:

On Mother's Day, what is rewarding than seeing students singing rhymes for their mother.

The following is a song students memorize and sing it to their moms on Mother's Day.

Materials: Crayons, white papers.

Prior introducing the song, the teacher asks students to think of ways that shows mother's love, and to represent it through drawing.

Let student share their pictures, hold discussions using them.

Finally, the teacher and the students both sing this song

My mom is a special lady (Sing it to the tune “ Eeensy, Weensy Spider”)

My mom is a special lady

So I hug her every day.

She gives me lots of food to eat.

And takes me out to play.

My mother reads me stories

And buys me sneakers, too.

I am so very happy that I have

A mom who loves me so!

Math:

Birds of feather

The following activity improves students’ number combinations and addition.

Materials: colored feathers, construction papers, birds cut out, cardboards, glue, markers.

Procedures:

The teacher distributes birds cut out, and cardboards.

Let each student trace and cut out two birds from construction papers.

Distribute feathers to students, not more than 10 feathers to each student.

Ask them to paste as many feathers as they prefer on the two birds.

Let them paste the two birds next to each other on a construction paper.

When they are done, let them count the number of feathers on each bird, and write it down under each bird.

Let them write the addition equation for the corresponding numbers on the construction paper under the two birds and find the answers.

Demonstrate students' work on the bulletin board.

April

Art:

Welcome Spring Activity:

It is springtime in Lebanon, and a new season has started. One of the ways to welcome a new season can be decorating the classroom's bulletin board in a way that reflects the symbols of this season. Now, it is the students' mission to decorate their bulletin boards for the spring.

Materials: green coloring pencils, light green cardboards, colored tissues, glue.

Procedure:

Students will cover the background of any bulletin board with light green cardboards. Each green coloring pencil will stand as the stem for the flower.

Students will paste their coloring pencils on bulletin board. Each student will have a colored tissue that will represent the flower. Students will wrinkle these tissues in a way that represents the flower, and then they will paste the colored tissue above each stem.

At the end, students will be ending up decorating the classroom bulletin board in a simple and attractive way.

Language arts:

Hunting Verbs Activity:

This activity will help students to differentiate between action verbs and nouns; in addition it will help them practice identifying action verbs in an active and interesting way.

Materials:

Verbs flashcards, glue, pencils, an empty verb list with birds drawings.

Procedure:

The teacher takes the students to the school yard in order to give the directions.

The teacher announces that it's time for hunting but not birds this time, you will be hunting verbs.

The teacher divides the student into pairs, and displays for each pair an empty verb list. Around the school yard, you will see different nouns and verbs written on flashcards.

Each pair is going to have a walk around the school yard and find as much action verbs as they can.

Each pair has 10 minutes to accomplish this task, when they are done, they will paste the verbs they found on the verb list.

Before starting the activity, the teacher explains the rules for hunting birds:

-
- 1- Use quiet voices so that birds won't fly away.
 - 2- Do not run: walk slowly, so that you can hunt as much birds as you can.

When all the pairs are done and the verbs are pasted on the verb list, the teacher counts the verbs each pair collected and announces the winners by giving them a reward "Best Hunters".

Music:

Feeling songs

This activity will help students identify facial expressions through singing a song.

Prior presenting the song the children prepare the materials needed to sing the song.

Materials: straws, cardboards, crayons.

Students cut out four circles, each one represents a face with these emotions: happy, sad, scared, and mad.

Students draw these faces and paste a straw at the back of each face.

Students share their experiences regarding these faces.

The teacher introduces the following song, and sings it along with the students.

Feelings (Sing to the tune twinkle, twinkle, little star)

I have feelings.

You do too

Let's all sing about a few.

I am happy. (Students raise the happy face)

I am sad. (Students raise the sad face)

I get scared. (Students raise the scared face).

I get mad (students raise the mad face).

I am proud of being me.

Math:

Beads in my Pocket

This activity is a combination of addition and subtraction. Students will practice those two skills through the following game.

Materials: a jacket with two pockets, pebbles.

Procedure:

Let students sit in a circle.

The teacher starts this activity by putting on the jacket and the pebbles in both pockets and announces the number of pebbles she or he has in both pockets; for example, the teacher might say I have 10 pebbles in both pockets, how many pebbles do I have in each pocket?

Starting by turn let each student start by guessing the number of pebbles in each pocket.

On the board, the teacher draws two columns with the following headings: right pocket, left pocket.

Write students' guesses on the board.

When a student guesses the correct number, the teacher shows the number of pebbles to ensure the correct answer, and then the winner will put on the jacket, chooses the number of

pebbles he or she wants to put in the jacket, and follows the same procedure that was done by the teacher. Every winner will follow the same procedure.

May

Art:

We Are All One “Activity”

It is labor’s day in Lebanon. Students need to invest this opportunity to get introduced to different occupations.

Materials:

Pictures for a variety of occupations, construction paper, crayons, pencils.

Procedure:

The teacher holds a discussion on different occupations and how each occupation helps in the community.

The discussion should include different community helpers such as janitors or gate men.

On a large construction paper with the title: We Are All One,” Happy Labor’s Day”, each student chooses an occupation he or she wants, and draw it, and write under it the answer for the following questions: Why are you helpful?

Next to each caption, students sign their names.

Finally, the teacher displays students’ work in the entrance hall of the school.

Language arts activity:

Familiar faces:

Students at this age are totally amazed by fairy tales characters. This activity will bring them with their favorite fairy tale character.

Materials:

Drawing papers, scissors, glue, crayons, and photos for each student.

Have each student cut out their face from their photo and mount it on a sheet of paper.

Then, students are encouraged to draw their favorite fairy tale character using their faces as the face of the character.

Finally, have students write about their illustrations under the picture they have drawn.

Music:

“Mozart”

This activity is a combination of music and art as its title suggests. It lets them broaden their imagination while listening to music.

Materials:

Construction papers, crayons, glue, scissors, tape recorder, musical notes cut outs.

Procedure:

Have children paint randomly on construction papers as they listen to music.

The teacher distributes musical notes, and students put these notes on the papers they have painted and cut them out.

The teacher and the student paste the newly made musical notes in the bulletin board of the classroom.

Math:

Seashell Patterns Activity:

Teaching pattern is one of the mathematical skills that are not easy for students to grasp.

Manipulation would be one of the ways that will facilitate teaching this concept.

Materials: assorted shells, glue, card stock strips.

Procedure:

Distribute strips of cards to students.

Give each student ten shells of two different sizes: small, and large.

Ask each student to paste the shells on the card strips, following the pattern big, little.

Display students' work on the bulletin board, and let students observe the patterns they did.

June

Art: The Last Shot Activity

This activity is designed to help students say good bye to the school year in a different way.

Materials:

An enlarged picture of a camera, white construction papers, crayons.

Procedure: The teacher pastes in the middle of the bulletin board an enlarged picture of a camera.

Each student will have a white piece of construction paper 4 cm width and 6 cm length.

On the construction paper, have students draw and color a favorite memory from the past year.

Using a black pen, every student writes a caption for his or her photo.

When students are done, they share their photos with their classmates and mount them on the bulletin board around the enlarged camera picture.

Language Arts:

It is summer time, the school is about to end and grade one students are able to recognize and identify different sounds. It's time for fishing rhyming words.

Activity: Fishing for a rhyme

Materials: 5 paper lunch bags, crayons, cardboards.

Procedure:

The teacher presents five paper bags and draws on each one a fishing bowl and label each one with a spelling word from grade one students' spelling practice books.

The teacher may write for example: fish, book, tale, box, ride.

On the board, the teacher writes randomly forty new words that rhyme with the above words.

The teacher will assign randomly from the word list that are written on the board two words for each student, where he or she will cut out a fish card and write the two words on these cards.

When the cards are ready, the teacher collects them again, ask the students to sit in a semicircle and present the five paper lunch bags and give the directions.

Each student will pick up two cards, read it in front of the class, and find the rhyming bag that match with the word selected and finally, insert it in it.

Music:**Sound Shaker Activity:**

At the end of each school year, students feel that they are free from the school rules, and gradually begin to break them. No one can blame students at this period of time, for they have been working hard for eight consecutive months and they can rarely control their emotions and behaviors. To help students reduce the stress of the hard work, and feel that the school year is about to end the following activity will create a festive mood and help them celebrate the end of the school year on their own way.

Materials:

Two plastic bottles for each student, colored construction papers, glue, beads, crayons, paint brushes.

Ask students to get two plastic water bottles from their homes.

Let them remove any stickers on these bottles.

Distribute construction papers for students, let them draw and decorate them the way they like, and tell students that this will be the cover of their sound shakers.

Using paint brushes, ask students to add glue to the plastic bottles. (Glue should cover all the parts of the bottles).

Demonstrate how to paste the construction papers the students have decorated them on the plastic bottles.

Let students wait about ten minutes so that the glue will be dry.

Distribute a bag of beads for each student, and let them fill up the bottle with these beads.

Ask students now, to close firmly the lid of the bottles.

Announce that it is time for using these shakers.

Give students free time to play with the shakers the way they want.

Math :

Lemonade for sale Activity:

The teacher tells the student that this week they are going to practice filling out a bar graph in an interesting way. Since summer is coming and the weather is getting holder, students will be selling lemonade for all other students and teachers throughout a whole week. The money collected will be raised to any charitable association.

Materials:

A bar graph, crayons, plastic cups, lemonade, problem solving worksheet.

Each day grade one students will prepare lemonade with their moms and get them to school.

During the recess, the teacher will prepare a stand in the playground for selling lemonade and students will be invited to buy lemonade cups.

On a large construction paper, the teacher draws a bar graph that has the school days on the base line, and the number of cups that are going to be sold each day (numbers from 1 to 50)on the other line.

The teacher will assign each day five students to fill out the graph using a marker.

For example on Monday, if they sell 15 cups they will color 15 squares on the graph starting from the word Monday on the baseline of the graph and going up to reach number 15.

On the last day of the week, the teacher distributes problem solving worksheets that help the students to follow the track of their sale, and figure out how many cups did they sell? Which day did they sell most number of cups? Which day did they sell the least number of cups? And how much money did they collect?

At the end of this week, the teacher and the students plan to visit a charitable association to donate the money they have collected.

Music:

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Ask students to get two plastic water bottles from their homes.

Let them remove any stickers on these bottles.

Distribute construction papers for students, let them draw and decorate them the way they like, and tell students that this will be the cover of their sound shakers.

Using paint brushes, ask students to add glue to the plastic bottles. (Glue should cover all the parts of the bottles).

Demonstrate how to paste the construction papers the students have decorated them on the plastic bottles.

Let students wait about ten minutes so that the glue will be dry.

Distribute a bag of beads for each student, and let them fill up the bottle with these beads.

Ask students now, to close firmly the lid of the bottles.

Announce that it is time for using these shakers.

Give students free time to play with the shakers the way they want.

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