

## **Just for fun! Early Social Studies Skills for Preschoolers**

If you have preschool-aged children in your home school environment, below are some suggestions for ways to introduce them to science-related concepts before their kindergarten curriculum begins. Many of these suggested activities can involve the whole family!

### **Overview**

#### **Expectations for Preschool Students:**

- Recognize change and sequence over time.
- Develop a spatial understanding of the world around them.
- Understand that individuals have many wants and have to make choices.
- Understand one's relationship to the family and community.

#### **Throughout Preschool You May Find Students:**

- Differentiating between past, present, and future; identifying family or personal events that happened in the past.
- Identifying aspects of the environment such as roads, buildings, trees, gardens, bodies of water, and land formations.
- Explaining how people make money and use that money to make choices among their various wants.
- Discussing similarities and respective differences among people within their classroom and community.

### **Preschool Learning Activities**

#### **History Concepts:**

- Differentiate between past, present, and future.
- Recognize family or personal events that happened in the past.
- Understand that how people live and what they do changes over time.
- Ask children to recall events from earlier in the day or from the day before.
- Provide scaffolding to assist children's recall of prior learning and events.
- Ask children to identify their plan for center time.
- Provide opportunities for children to plan for upcoming transitions, events, and activities.
- Tell stories of past events.
- Select examples from pictures that illustrate past, present, and future.
- Describe how they have grown.
- Participate in creating a class memory book.
- Track the height of a plant. Progress photos and measurements are recorded on calendar.

#### **Geography Concepts:**

- Identify aspects of the environment, such as roads, buildings, trees, gardens, bodies of water, and land formations.
- Develop an awareness of the school, neighborhood, and community.
- Involve children in firsthand experiences in their community, such as exploration of the school, neighborhood, and city.
- Furnish learning centers with literature, activities, and materials for play based on children's experiences with their community. For example, visit the doctor's office and then create a "doctor's office" at home.

- Involve children in discussions about the homes they live in and the different types of homes and buildings in the community.
- Have children interpret simple maps of the classroom, playground and neighborhood.
- Provide materials, literature, and activities that explore different types of homes and aspects of the children's surrounding environment, such as apartments, single-family homes, motels, modular homes, trees, rivers, mountains, and buildings.
- Build with blocks or draw various environments.
- Take pictures of familiar building locations to place on a map of the house, church, mall, etc. The children glue the pictures on the map while the adult labels the location.
- Identify and discuss the things they see, such as trees, fountains, streets, etc.

#### **Economic Concepts:**

- Identify choices that individuals can make.
- Explain how individuals earn money and use it to make choices among their various wants.
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in household jobs.
- Create situations in which children exchange money in a play situation.
- Engage in dramatic play, playing various job roles and pretending to perform the work associated with the chosen job.
- Use pretend money while engaging in dramatic play activities.
- Pretend to have jobs and be paid for their work.
- Exchange money for goods through play.
  - Recognize coins and currency as money.
  - Identify how money is used.
  - Discuss why we need money.
  - Sort coins by physical attributes such as color or size.

#### **Civics Concepts:**

- Recognize membership in family, neighborhood, school, team, and various other groups and organizations.
- Understand similarities and respect differences among people within their classroom and community.
- Extend children's knowledge of what people do in the community.
- Engage in one-on-one and small group conversations about similarities and differences among individuals, such as hair, eyes, skin tone, talents, interests, and food preferences.
- Provide books, classroom materials, photos, props, music, etc., that support diversity with respect to race, culture, ethnicity, age, ability, and non-stereotyping roles.
- Encourage children to appreciate individual differences by providing diverse materials, literature and activities.
- Understand the reasons for rules in the home and classroom and for laws in the community.
- Show interest in interacting with and developing relationships with others.
- Recognize that everyone has rights and responsibilities within a group.
- Demonstrate self-regulated behaviors and fairness in resolving conflicts.
- Discuss rules with children.
- Explain the purpose of rules such as safety and respect.
- Begin to introduce games that have rules.
- Read both fiction and nonfiction books that support following rules.