

Summer Fun



*A Summer Activity Handbook for Parents
and Kids*

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SUMMER FUN

It's **summertime** and the living is easy... as long as you keep the kids busy!

That's where this little handbook will come in handy. (*which naturally, all handbooks should be!*)

After 25+ years of operating my own Childcare while raising three boys as a single mom, I know a thing or two about keeping kids busy. I've included ideas and activities that may need to be modified depending on the ages of your children and I encourage you to get creative in taking some of these activities and adapting them as you see fit. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at MaryK@mkweinhagen.com

Enjoy your summer, Be Safe, and remember to...

Play well together, nurture one another, and treat each other with respect



“Pausing to listen to an airplane in the sky, stooping to watch a ladybug on a plant, sitting on a rock to watch the waves crash over the quayside – children have their own agendas and timescales. As they find out more about their world and their place in it; they work hard not to let adults hurry them. We need to hear their voices.”

Cathy Nutbrown
Contemporary British educational theorist



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“As astronauts and space travelers children puzzle over the future; as dinosaurs and princesses they unearth the past. As weather reporters and restaurant workers they make sense of reality; as monsters and gremlins they make sense of the unreal.”

Gretchen Owocki

Contemporary American early childhood educator



Art Recipes and Suggestions

Body Paint
Ceramic Dough
Cotton Dough Creations
Crayon Chunks
Finger Paint
Flannel or Felt Board
Glistening Squeeze Bottle Painting
Gluing
Goo
Modeling Mixture
Mystery Bag
Oobleck
Plastic Bubbles
Play Dough
Positive and Negative Stencils
Sawdust Molding Compound
Soap Mixture
White Makeup

Body Paint

1 cup inexpensive baby lotion or cold cream (think dollar store!)
1 tablespoon dishwashing liquid soap
1 teaspoon tempera paint powder

Mix the ingredients. Add a few drops of water if the mixture is too thick.

Ceramic Dough

2 cups salt
2/3 cup water

Mix together in a pan. Stir until mixture is well heated (3-4 min.) Remove from heat.

1 cup cornstarch
½ cup cold water

Mix together. Stir quickly into first mixture. Mixture should be stiff dough. (If it doesn't thicken, reheat and stir for one more minute.)

Cotton Dough Creations

1 – 2 cups flour

1 – 1-1/2 cups water

cotton balls

In a bowl, mix the flour and water a little at a time until they make smooth paste. Cover an area with newspaper (it's summer... go outside!). Let child coat the cotton balls in the paste and then form several balls into creatures, letters, or creations of any shape. Encourage child to let the balls stay puffy rather than flatten them all out as shapes are created. (good luck with that ;-)) Place the creations on a cookie sheet. Bake 300 degrees for 30-45 minutes or until lightly browned and hard. These may be painted if desired.

Crayon Chunks

broken pieces of crayon

Small or broken crayons can be remelted into a "crayon" with a different shape. Scrape the crayon pieces to allow for true colors. Peel the paper off if necessary. Put crayons in muffin tin and set oven at 300 degrees. Melt light colors separately from dark colors so that you may reuse the tin. Watch the melting process carefully, especially if you try two or three colors in the same tin. When the crayons are melted, remove the tin from oven and cool. Dip pan in hot water if necessary to remove the crayon chunks.

Finger Paint

liquid starch

dry tempera powder

large pieces of white shelf paper or finger painting paper

Wetting the shelf paper with a sponge of clear water lets the paint move more easily. Place a 1- to 2- inch drop of starch on each piece of wet shelf paper. Sprinkle on dry tempera powder. Suggest your child use one hand to mix the tempera in the starch. After the tempera is well mixed, let the children spread the color over all of the paper. They are now ready to finger paint. (in a pinch and out of tempera? Try dry Kool Aid)

Flannel or Felt Board

Creating flannelboard story pieces can be easy and inexpensive. Purchase non-woven interfacing at a fabric or discount store. A yard will provide enough interfacing for several stories. Draw or trace figures on the interfacing. Use crayons or markers to color the pieces before cutting them out. Lay a single layer of brown paper over the figures and use a warm iron to "set" the color. Store in a folder with a story script.

Another option popular with the kids in my life is to take one of their favorite books and

photocopy the images. Glue these onto the interfacing and let your child color them, 'setting' with an iron as above. Then watch the kids enjoy interacting with their favorite story characters... on or off the flannelboard (boards are easily made by simply gluing flannel or felt to the sides of a sturdy cardboard box)

Glistening Squeeze Bottle Painting

½ cup flour

½ cup salt

½ cup water

1 teaspoon powdered tempera paint

1 Tablespoon glitter (optional)

Mix the ingredients and pour into plastic squeeze bottles such as old liquid detergent bottles. Let your child squeeze the mixture onto tagboard or cardboard pieces. The salt give the mixture a glistening effect after it dries. Provide several different colors of the mixture so your child may experiment with color blending as they make designs.

Gluing

Glue bottles can be frustrating and hard for many small children to squeeze successfully. An alternative to clogged glue bottles is to pour a small amount of glue on a lid, paper plate, or some of those cute little ketchup cups found at fast food restaurants and let children use cotton swabs or small brushes as applicators.

Goo

liquid starch

White glue (NOT school glue)

Paper cup

popsicle stick or spoon

food coloring

Pour equal amounts of glue and starch in a paper cup. *Pour glue into the cup first for best results.* Add small amount of food coloring. Stir until the mixture forms a cohesive ball. Knead thoroughly until smooth. If the mixture is stringy, add glue, a small amount at a time. Continue to knead "goo" - kids love it!

Modeling Mixture

1 cup salt

1 cup flour

2/3 cup water

food coloring

Mix flour and salt in a large bowl. Add water, and mix until the consistency of thick frosting. Mix well. Add food coloring now before modeling or paint the creations when completely dry.

Spread on heavy-duty-cardboard. Dig out ponds and roads, build up mountains and walls, etc. Allow to dry for one to two days.

Mystery Bag

Children enjoy playing games that involve an element of surprise or mystery. Make your own mystery bag by cutting off the bottom third of a jeans leg. Sew one end shut and put a drawstring on the other end. Add small objects. Have your child reach in to find an object that you name without them peeking or... have them feel the object and see if they can identify it.

Oobleck

1 box (1 lb.) cornstarch

1 ½ cups cold water

1 tablespoon food color

Plastic dish pan or big bowl

Is it a liquid? A solid? Your child's imagination will blossom with Oobleck – a wondrous substance that uncovers all kinds of possibilities.

Mix the cornstarch, water, and food coloring in the container with your hands until it is smooth. Try this: Squeeze the Oobleck in your fist. Now open up your hand. Draw a finger down the center of the solution. Pound on the Oobleck, then feel it gently with your palm.

What happens? If you touch Oobleck gently, it is soft and yielding like liquid. When you squeeze it or pound it quickly, it is hard and crumbly. Why? Cornstarch is ground up into such fine particles that the molecules line up like little plates. When you pound on it, the cornstarch plates are rigid. When you move it slowly, the plates slide around and then act like a liquid.

This recipe makes enough Oobleck for several children to play with. You can make smaller amounts by mixing 2 parts cornstarch to 1 part water. It will keep for several days if you continue to add water as it dries. Store in a covered container.

Plastic Bubbles

1 cup water

2 tablespoons liquid dish detergent (Joy or Dawn works best)

2 tablespoons glycerin

smooth wire

Mix the ingredients. Cut the wire into 6 – 8 inch lengths, and shape into handle with a hoop. Pour mixture into a pie pan and dip the wire into the bubble mixture and blow or wave the wand. Look for kitchen utensils with holes and try those. Clean flyswatters are also great.

Play Dough

1 cup flour

½ cup salt

1 cup water
1 tablespoon cooking oil
2 teaspoons cream of tartar or alum
dry koolaid for scent and color

Mix together all of the ingredients. Cook over medium heat until the mixture forms a ball. Pour out and knead the mixture a few minutes to increase smoothness. Keep in a plastic bag or a tightly covered container.

Positive and Negative Stencils

When you cut stencils, you create two types of stencils. The positive stencil is the cutout object that can be traced around on the outside perimeter. The negative stencil is the stencil created when the cutout is removed. It can be traced on the inside of the frame. Younger children will have more control and, therefore, greater success using a simple negative stencil. Using both the positive and negative stencils is like getting two for one!

Sawdust Molding Compound

1 cup sawdust
½ cup wallpaper paste
water

Mix dry ingredients together in a small bowl. Add water a little at a time until the mixture is the consistency of soft putty. Mold into shape. Place on a cookie rack to dry. Paint if desired. Makes enough for one child.

Soap Mixture

Ivory soap flakes
water

As the children watch and take turns holding the mixer, mix several cups of soap powder with water, a little at a time, until the mixture makes a ball. Give some of the mixture to your child to knead, squeeze, and explore. Talk about how it looks, feels, and smells... it's different than anything else. (watch that they do not rub eyes) Mold into balls of soap or other desired shapes.

White Makeup (Individual Recipe)

2 teaspoons white tempera powder
1 teaspoon cool water
½ teaspoon white hand lotion

In a small paper cup or plastic butter tub, mix the ingredients together by stirring with a spoon or popsicle stick. Add a few drops of water if the mixture is too thick. Then use fingertips or a paintbrush to apply the white makeup to face. To color makeup for nose or cheeks, add ½ teaspoon of a colored tempera powder to the recipe.

“Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play.”

Heraclitus
Greek philosopher
535-475 BCE

Thanks so much for downloading this first chapter of the Summer Fun Handbook! I'd love to hear and see the results your kids get from using any of the art recipes included. Please feel free to stop by my [downstream parenting](#) blog and leave a comment. If you can link to a picture, even better!!! ;-)

You can order the complete handbook and receive it immediately by clicking on this link:

[SUMMER FUN HANDBOOK](#)

“So, in all these spheres—in painting, sculpture, drawing, music, singing, dancing, gymnastics, games, sports, writing and speech—we can carry on to our heart’s content, all through our long lives, complex and specialized forms of exploration and experiment.”

Desmond Morris
Contemporary British zoologist

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



Just a brief word about materials –

None of the materials suggested in this book are difficult to find. In fact, one of my regular stops for stocking up on art & craft supplies is one of my local dollar stores. Admittedly, their section appears limited... but stroll the store and start thinking outside the box. A bunch of artificial flowers can turn a paper bag hat into something quite fancy, mylar balloons purchased for a dollar apiece can add some interesting shiny paper substitute for collages, and lotions, creams and soaps used in the recipes can be used generously when purchased at the dollar store.



Short of that, you may have a local craft store that you want to check out, but my #1 favorite place for supplies for many years has been **S&S PRODUCTS**. It's true, the name reveals nothing, but for the best price on virtually everything, from *burlap* to *tempera paints* (powdered or premixed), from *tagboard* to *seashells*, with over 2000 products they are bound to have what you're looking for... at a price you won't believe!



The next resource I want to direct you to is **DISCOVERY TOYS!** If you haven't yet run across Discovery Toys you're in for a treat. They carry a line of Educational Toys that are versatile, fun learning tools. Most of their toys have a twist, that is best understood through demonstration, which is why these toys are sold by direct sellers via home parties. Since I mentioned their stacking and nesting cups for sand and water play due to the fact they are volumetrically proportional, it seems only fair I send you a link to the catalog if you are interesting in picking them up. (**NOTE:** This is a link to my page. As an Educational Consultant with

Discovery Toys I will earn on purchases made)



CHINABERRY is another long time favorite of mine. I recommend them here not because they are likely to provide any needed materials for this ideas in the Summer Fun Handbook but because they are a fabulous resource for some beautiful and unusual books, toys and games for children and families. They carry a wonderful line of products and they target products made of wood, fiber or paper.



You may have noticed that the cooking section of this book was quite small. That's because I feel there are so many great resources for recipe ideas available online at no cost to you. Kids love to cook and any way you can include them in the process will be welcomed by them. A couple of resources that I find really helpful are **DINE WITHOUT WHINE** for their wonderful



menu planning and **KID APPROVED MEALS** for recipes that are kid tested and approved :-)
Check them out if you are tired of the same old, same old – you might get a fresh idea or two.

Please note that making a purchase from any of the recommended resources is likely to earn me a little bit of money. I mention this in an effort to be fully transparent and law-abiding. ;-)

I hope you've found some of these ideas useful. If you have any feedback, I'd love to hear it. Send me an email at maryk@mkweinhagen.com

Thank you so much...
I appreciate YOU!

HAVE FUN PLAYING THIS SUMMER!

