

Sensory Exploration

Subject:

Learning through the senses.

Focus:

Use language to describe, explain, and elaborate on children's discoveries.

Overview:

Children will be exploring through the use of their senses.

Purpose:

According to Piaget, children learn through exploration of their environment during the first two years of life. Providing children with opportunities that allow them to exercise their senses is important for young developing minds.

Objective:

To promote language development, thinking, and problem solving. Children will

- Be able to use their senses to learn about their environment.
- Develop a sense of confidence.
- Have the opportunity to socially interact with other children and adults.

Resources and Materials:

None.

Activities and Procedures:

Allow infants and toddlers to explore each of the materials that will engage their various senses. Teachers or other adults can play with children to facilitate their learning.

- Sense of Touch: *Touch a Box*
 - Set out one large box, big enough for a child to crawl into.
 - Line the walls of the box with different textured paper or material. The child will have fun exploring this sensory cave.
- Sense of Hearing: *Sound of Bottles*
 - Collect some small plastic bottles and fill them with items that make a different sound (e.g., salt, beans, paper clips, rice).
 - Let the children shake the bottles to listen to the sounds.
- Caution: Be sure to supervise this game and that the children do not attempt to open the bottles.
- Sense of Smell: *Smelly Cups*
 - Set out two or three paper cups.
 - Place a cotton ball in each cup, upon which you have placed a scent (e.g., coffee, lemon extract, floral perfume).
 - Have the children tell you what each cup smells like. If they do not know the name of the smell, they can tell you if they like the smell or not.
- Sense of Vision: *Color Areas*
 - Set out a red piece of paper.
 - Ask the children to look around the room for small objects that are the same color as the red paper, and have them place the objects on the paper.
 - Continue with other colors, if interest lasts.

- Sense of Taste: *The Taste Test*
 - Set out two mini snacks. Have the children try both of them and tell you which one they like best.
 - Variation: Set out two snacks, one salty and one sweet. Have the children tell you which snack is salty.

Tying It All Together:

Providing activities that require the use of their senses is important for developing children. The senses are used to receive information about the world around us and to find out what is being communicated to us from our environment. By doing this activity, children are processing the information they receive and are gaining knowledge.

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