

Objective: for children to develop a variety of skills and knowledge while threading, learning about the history and traditions of Christmas.

Materials

Clean white (kitchen) string is best for this .
Clean, washed threading needles (plastic works well!)
Traditionally popped corn, nuts and dried fruits (dried apple, apricot, dates, sultanas, figs) were used to trim trees in many cultures before glass ornaments were 1st invented. However, any "threadable" foods can be used such as cheezels, Breakfast Cereals with holes (like Fruit Loops™, Cheerios™), pretzels...make a list with the children of foods with holes in!

Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes*

Outcome 1: Children

- develop confidence and knowledge through successfully threading and discussing learning experience.

Outcome 2: Children show

- understanding of family and community through discussing Christmas symbols, traditions and beliefs.
- respect for cultural diversity through traditional craft and historical understanding of modern tradition development.

Outcome 3: Children

- become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing through interactions with others and personal success.
- are responsible for physical wellbeing through understanding nutrition, natural and processed foods as well as fine motor development.

Outcome 4: Children develop

- creativity, persistence and imagination, making decisions about materials to use, completing to their satisfaction.
- a range of skills and knowledge such as problem solving, experimentation, investigation, classification and manipulation of materials
- ability to resource their learning through natural and processed materials.

Outcome 5: Children

- interact verbally and non-verbally for a range of purposes.
- make meaning using a range of media: threading materials
- begin to understand how pattern systems work.

Extension Ideas

Make fruit skewers (see recipes) to share. Discuss fresh and dried fruit. Why would dried fruits be used for decorations? Dry some fruit and see what happens. If the children made a specific pattern, see if they can say it out loud. Make a threading with matching pattern.

Instructions

Make different lengths of thread available for children. Traditionally very long lengths of decoration were made to wrap around the tree, so maybe a group threading could be done.

Some dried fruits come with holes (dried apple) but most without, however, plastic threading needles easily pierce through with a little pressure, so children should be able to do this with little assistance, dependant on their developmental level.

Discuss this particular Christmas tradition.

Key Learning Area (Skills and Knowledge)

Pre-Numeracy (Mathematics)

Patterning and sequencing— a one element pattern (the same item over and over) or a 2, 3, 4 element pattern. Observe if children can repeat patterns, do they self correct?

Number (Counting and Addition) "one more" and "how many altogether?" "add another leaf".

One to One Correspondence (counting skill)

Positional Language— before, after, next, through.

Literacy/Vocabulary (English)

Dates, sultanas, apple, apricot, popped corn, figs, pineapple, Christmas traditions., before, after, through, next, add, more, altogether, threading, art. Discuss materials used.

One to One Correspondence (early reading skill)

Health and Physical Education Fine Motor Skills— Threading and manipulating objects.

Science Grouping, classifying— things with holes, things without, food directly from nature, processed foods. Different colours, different shapes.

Let children think of classifications.

Discuss Dehydration (related to dried fruit)

Studies of Society and Environment

Traditionally, before manufactured decorations became available in the mid-1800's, Christmas Trees were trimmed with popped corn, fruits, nuts, baked pastries and candles. Late in the Middle Ages, Germans and Scandinavians placed evergreen trees inside their homes or just outside their doors to show their hope in the forthcoming spring. "Christmas trees" may have evolved from these early traditions.

Linked Experiences

Threading/Sewing/Weaving Nature Walk & Collage
Cooking Capers Collage Christmas Experiences