

Westchester Reform Temple

ECC Curriculum Units

TWO'S:

The two's curriculum will include, but is not limited to the following:

Shapes, Colors, Numbers, All About Family, Jewish Holidays, Thanksgiving, Seasons.

We also implement a **STEAM** approach to learning. **STEAM** is an acronym for:

Science

Technology

Engineering

Art

Mathematics

Goals:

The primary goals for our two year-olds are separation and socialization. The separation process looks different for each child and family. First, and foremost, we build trust with you. Your children and their separation will follow organically.

Our twos are learning to socialize. They usually begin with parallel play. We work to foster interactive play, simple conversation, verbal skills, making friends, sharing, caring and self-help skills.

For example, our Colors Unit incorporates many different areas of development. See below:

Colors

- Making and playing with colored play dough **S, A, M**
- Painting with one color or mixing colors **S, A**
- Playing with colorful manipulatives **E**
- Sorting and counting colored manipulatives **M**
- Hiding different colored items in a sensory table
- Eating different colored snacks: apples, oranges, blueberries
- Cooking different colored food items **S, T**
- Building with colored blocks **E, M**
- Reading color-themed books
- Singing color-themed songs **A**
- Parachute play
- Culminating in a Color Party!

Skills: Fine motor, gross motor, literacy, language

THREE'S:

The three's curriculum may include, but is not limited to the following:

Colors, Shapes, Seasons, Apples, Pumpkins, Thanksgiving, Owls, Birds, Butterflies, Bears, Community, Jewish Holidays.

Goals:

Our threes work on interactive play skills (negotiating, sharing, making friends). We strive to instill the use of language in appropriate and effective ways. We reinforce self-help skills. We continue to work on the concepts of shapes and colors, numbers and letters. Handwriting skills are introduced, and the children practice cutting, tearing, gluing and sorting.

For example, our Bears-Themed Unit incorporates many different areas of development. See below:

Bears:

- Baking bear shaped cookies with cookie cutters **S,T, M**
- Learning about hibernation **S**
- Observing bears in their environment on the iPad **S, T**
- Block-building a zoo with bears inside **E**
- Bear crafts including lacing through pre-cut holes **A**
- Counting and sorting colored bears **M**
- Weighing small bears **S, T, M**
- Going on a "bear hunt."
- Measuring bears **M**
- Bear-themed puzzles **M**
- Creating a bear den in the classroom for dramatic play **E, A**
- Reading books about bears **S**
- Coordinating with our Handwriting Without Tears' letter of the week, "B"
- Making a list of words that begin with B

Skills: Fine motor, literacy, language

FOUR'S:

The four's curriculum *may* include, but is not limited to the following:

Seasons, Apples, Pumpkins, Thanksgiving, Dinosaurs, All About Me, Human Body, Composting, International Studies, Community Helpers, Butterflies, Space, Jewish Holidays.

Goals:

We work more in depth with this age group on interactive play skills (negotiating, sharing, and using language in appropriate and effective ways). We reinforce self-help skills and independent thinking.

Our fours begin to learn observation skills and problem-solving strategies. We start teaching them to multi-task and follow multi-step instructions. We hone their graphomotor skills and teach/encourage them to form some letters and write their names. We prepare them for the Kindergarten year ahead!

For example, our Dinosaur Unit, which transforms our four year-olds into mini paleontologists, incorporates many different areas of development. See below:

Dinosaurs:

- Making salt-dough and creating dinosaurs **S, A, M**
- Creating dinosaur crafts with cutting, painting and gluing **E, A**
- Baking dinosaur cookies **S, M**
- Excavating dinosaur bones in our classroom sand tables **S**
- Using iPads as a resource to research dinosaurs **S, T**
- Counting dinosaurs on a dinosaur number line **M**
- Measuring with tape how tall different dinosaurs were **M**
- Comparing and contrasting different types of dinosaurs **S**
- Mapping where dinosaurs lived **S**
- Block-building to create dinosaur environments for dramatic play **S, E, M**
- Playing and interacting with dinosaur toys
- Learning vocabulary terms like herbivore, carnivore and omnivore **S**
- Learning the names of some species of dinosaurs **S**
- Reading books about dinosaurs (practicing making predictions and assessing comprehension) **S**
- Journaling about dinosaurs **S**
- Coordinating with our Handwriting Without Tears' letter of the week, "D"
- Making a list of words that begin with D

This unit culminates with a visit from a paleontologist from the Museum of Natural History. She brings authentic artifacts and fossils.

Skills: fine motor, language, literacy, social studies

TWO'S, THREE'S AND FOUR'S:

At the ECC, our curriculum is both emergent (inspired by the children and their interests) and also teacher-directed. We document our process. Some of the curriculum units are revisited within the different grade levels; however, the children's experience with the topic will be new each time depending on the age and developmental level of the child. The familiarity of a particular topic is exciting and important. Subsequent grade levels, take the topic to a higher level of learning and understanding.

Within all of our classrooms, children are attaining a variety of skills.

Fine motor skills are attained while cutting, drawing, painting, taping, gluing, manipulating playdough and sewing or lacing.

Language skills are developed while playing cooperatively, interacting with teachers and classmates, participating in circle time, fulfilling classroom jobs and singing songs.

Literacy skills are honed as children listen to stories and discuss them with teachers and classmates. Our children have the opportunity to journal (drawing pictures, dictating or writing words) about various topics. They also learn to recognize their names, along with their classmates' names.

Science skills are acquired as the children make observations about the weather and seasons. Cooking, mixing colors and other experiments teach children to become curious and make predictions about their environment.

Math skills are developed organically as the children count days on the calendar, count snacks and count friends when taking attendance. Following recipes while cooking also exposes children to measurement and fractions.

Gross Motor skills are developed daily. The children play outside or in the running room. They dance and play movement games in their classrooms, as well as, with our coach and our movement specialist.

Technology/Engineering skills are introduced as the children use different appliances when cooking. iPads are also available from time to time. We use them for researching scientific topics. Building with blocks, Magnatiles and other manipulatives reinforce these skills as well.

Problem-solving skills are vital. Children learn resilience when working with blocks and solving puzzles. With the help of our teachers, children learn to negotiate through different obstacles in an age-appropriate manner.

Social skills are at central to early childhood education. We model negotiation and cooperation daily in our classrooms. We help children learn to interact with peers and make friends! We teach them coping skills, when they feel frustrated or disappointed. We practice taking turns and helping each other. Our classes build community among very young children.

Creativity is fostered daily in our classrooms. Dramatic play abounds in our housekeeping and block areas. Children are exposed to age-appropriate art materials like paint, playdough and glue. Their creations are often displayed on the classroom walls and in our hallways.

At our ECC, children learn through play, modeling, observation, experimentation, positive reinforcement, and interacting with peers and teachers.