

Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood



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*Recommended for
Ages 3 - 6
PreK to Grade 1*

A Reproducible Learning Guide for Educators

This guide is designed to help educators prepare for, enjoy, and discuss **Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood**. It contains background, discussion questions, and activities appropriate for ages 3 to 6.

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Smithsonian Associates

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ABOUT THE PLAY

Meet the butcher, baker, pizza-dough maker, and all of the friendly people who make our neighborhoods terrific places to live every day. Recycled crafting and interactive songs make this community day the perfect blend of learning and just plain fun.

These learning plays were created as part of in-school residencies promoting **creative approaches to curriculum elements** in early childhood classrooms. We are proud to present them now at our museum theatre location at the Smithsonian to encourage everyone to “get in on the act.”



Playing ‘pretend’ as characters in stories encourages **sequencing** (*What comes next?*), **verbal skills** and **vocabulary** (*What color flowers? Why did it happen like that?*), **math** (*How many cupcakes? Let’s count the pennies we need to buy the balloon!*), **pre-science** (*What do we need to get these clothes clean?*) and **problem solving** (*Oh no! How can we help?*). Each of these skills is highlighted in plays that surround different themes (zoos, field trips, veterinarians, habitats, etc.).

‘CRAFT’ A PLAY!

You can make what you saw on stage today. After our shows in schools, the *Creative Tools for Teaching* ensemble visits Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms to help classes craft some of the sets, props, and costumes, so they can play neighborhood too. Using both **readily available and recycled materials**, we invite audiences to “play the play” at home or in the classroom. Sing songs, make puppets, build forts, and use your imagination to bring these classic stories to life.



BUILD A CARDBOARD HOUSE!

Do you have some cardboard boxes lying around? You can use them to build a small house to play in.

Materials

- 2 cardboard boxes
- Tape
- Pipe Cleaner or String
- Scissors

Directions

1. Build the base of the house by taking a large box and taping the flaps together pointing up.
2. Cut out a door from one side of your house.
3. Take the piece you cut out and fasten it to the wall of your house with pipe cleaners or string so the door can open and close.
4. Make the roof by taking two large pieces of cardboard and connecting them over the house.
5. Finish the roof by putting in triangular pieces of cardboard to finish the roof.
6. Done! You can decorate your house anyway you want to make it unique.

Read more here: www.instructables.com/id/Build-a-House-Out-of-Old-Boxes



MAKE A RESTAURANT MENU!

Pretend you're in a restaurant with these handmade menus!

Materials

- Grocery store sale folders, food magazine, or newspaper
- File folder
- Scissors
- Glue
- Marker

Directions

1. Cut out pictures of the food you want to serve at your restaurant from the magazine.
2. Glue the pictures onto the inside of the file folder.
3. Make up prices and descriptions for the food you will be 'serving' and write them next to each picture.
4. On the front of the folder, write the name of your restaurant.
5. Time to play! Invite your friends and family to your restaurant and order food. Practice your math skills by counting up the bill.

Read more here: www.prekinders.com/community-theme



TIPS FOR USING CREATIVITY IN YOUR CLASSROOM:

- Don't forget to decorate! Your materials can always use some child design — let their imaginations run wild as they transform plain boxes, socks, and household items into theatre.
- Always keep your toolbox nearby: a shoebox of crayons, markers, safe scissors, bits of cloth, yarn, paper rolls, egg cartons, etc. Your Picasso will thank you.
- Everybody plays! Don't forget to play with your children and students — bring out your inner artist and 'inner child' and your real children will play better. You are their imagination role models. Just let your child be the expert — support their ideas and help make them work.
- Keep it simple! The point is to play together, have fun, and not try too hard. Look for when it is time to stop — and put the theatre 'props' away for the next time. You are making your own toys.
- Collect raw materials: old socks, clean paper plates or cups, cardboard, bits of packing materials, yarn or ribbon from birthday parties — these all enrich your artist's palette.
- Crafting is a fun 'waiting' activity! Set your artist up with a goal, and time will pass more quickly. Remember to leave time for clean-up. (Do you have a clean-up song? You should!)
- Make the show come to life! This show is about family and, while the students can play in the centers at school, they can also play in their actual rooms at home. Build a fort in the living room!

Creative Tools for Teaching: From Your ECE Classroom to the Stage—and Back!

Each original show is packed with sing-along and play-along moments as they tell exciting and heart-warming stories with which young learners can connect. These new productions engage and delight as they foster pre-literacy, numeracy, and emotional intelligence in children. Audiences become part of the performance—right from their seats. Enjoy these creative, enriching experiences with your students in the theater, then use our Learning Guide resources to extend the exploration into the classroom with background material, activities, and Smithsonian connections and on our new website, Creative Tools for Teachers.



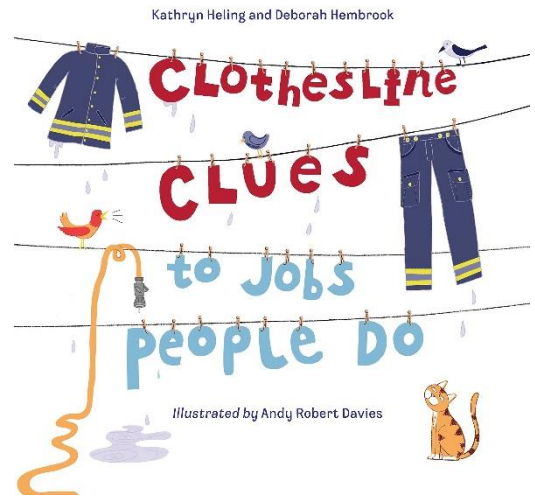
Don't miss the last show in the series, *Jojo's Backyard Safari*, running May 15-17, 2019.

Creative Tools for Teaching brings these wonderful plays to the stage, keeping the DIY elements and offering Discovery Theater audiences the invitation to 'play the play' with us and back in classroom or home, with the children.

READ...

Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do by Kathryn Helig and Deborah Hembrook

Who wears what to work? The clues in each lively verse can be spotted hanging from the clotheslines. A mail carrier's uniform, the artist's brushes, and the chef's apron all hang from the clothesline. Then turn the page to learn which professionals wear and use the special gear in the jobs they do. Clever illustrations show the workers helping one another, and in the end, everyone joins together for a celebration that is out of this world. A perfect choice for reading aloud and encouraging kids to join in the guessing and reveal.



PLAY...

Pocket of Preschool

Find some fun and engaging community helper activities for preschool and kindergarten students online here. You can use these in the classroom or one on one with your children.

www.pocketofpreschool.com/community-helpers-activities-centers-preschool-kindergarten

Education.com

Fire fighters, police officers, doctors and teachers are only some of the community helpers that work to make the world a better place. In this interactive quiz, your preschooler will learn about community service jobs, including the person who keeps neighborhoods safe and the person who teaches us new things every day.

www.education.com/game/community-helpers-quiz



WATCH...

Job Songs!

Sing teach and learn about jobs occupations in this very fun animated kids music video! Children toddlers and babies can sing about occupations and jobs, such as doctor, nurse, firefighter, astronaut, and much more

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdvTIQzsaYI





Smithsonian Institution

OUR MISSION: "THE INCREASE AND DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE"

Smithsonian Associates advances the Institution's mission through life-enriching educational and cultural experiences inspired by the Smithsonian's research and collections for DC-region students, families, and adults, and for learning communities nationwide.

Discovery Theater has been presenting DC-area children with live educational performances for almost 40 years. With programs that enrich the Smithsonian experience for nearly 50,000 children annually, Discovery Theater is a gateway to the exhibits, collections, and themes contained in the museums and galleries on the National Mall and beyond. We explore American history and cultures, folk tales from around the world, and exciting, accessible science and math programs in the company of puppeteers, storytellers, dancers, actors, and musicians. Discovery Theater performances unite ideologies, enact themes that reflect the diversity of its audiences, open avenues of self-reflection, and offer an enjoyable means for parents and teachers to demonstrate life's lessons. There's so much to do and explore at the Smithsonian—and Discovery Theater is the ideal place to begin!



Our Location

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