



**BEAUTIFUL DAY
IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**

*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 3-6.

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**The Nora Roberts Foundation
Smithsonian Women's Committee**



Smithsonian Associates

www.DiscoveryTheater.org

BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

ABOUT THE PLAY

Join us on an adventure through the neighborhood led by our favorite community helpers. We'll meet the crossing guard, the librarian, and all become volunteer firefighters. 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."



ABOUT LEARNING PLAYS

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. 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
- Markers
- 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.
6. Done! You can decorate your house anyway you want in order to make it unique.

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

MAKE YOUR OWN PIZZA PROJECT!

Do you want to create your own pizza like they do in the pizza parlors? All you need is colorful paper and imagination to create your own pizza masterpiece collage.

Materials

- 9x12 brown craft paper (for the base of the pizza)
- Colorful craft paper
- Paper scraps for toppings (green peppers, onions, cheese)
- Glue
- Crayons

Directions

1. Ask students what shape most pizzas are. Students will trace a circle on brown or yellow construction paper and cut it out.
2. Students color the "sauce" with red crayon leaving the edge of the "crust" showing.
3. Ask students what shape or line shredded cheese is? Students will cut out thin white rectangles for cheese and glue and overlap them on the pizza.
4. Demonstrate different topping shapes and question what shapes they are. (Pepperoni slices are red circles, mushrooms are brown semi-circles, sausages are brown ovals, olives are black circles, green peppers are triangles, pineapple are yellow squares, etc.)
5. Students glue and overlap topping shapes.



Read more here: www.kinderart.com/art-lessons/sculpture/shape-collage-pizzas/

TIPS FOR USING CREATIVITY IN YOUR CLASSROOM:

- Don't forget to decorate! Your materials can always use a child's eye — 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, to have fun, and to 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!

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.

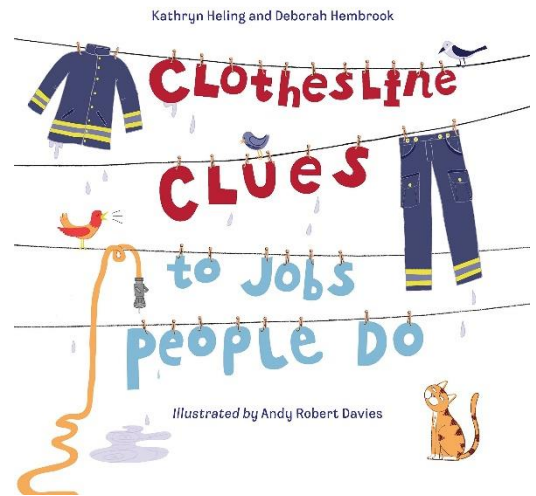
www.education.com/game/community-helpers-quiz



READ...

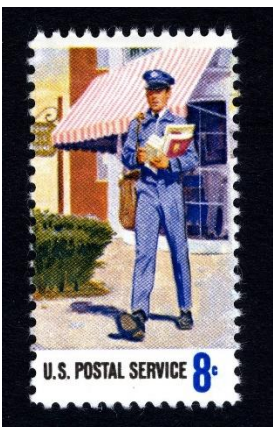
Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do
by Kathryn Helig and Deborah Hembrook

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 special gear in the jobs they do. Clever illustrations show how 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, encouraging kids to join in the guessing and the big reveal.



SMITHSONIAN CONNECTION

Visit National Museum of American History's
Always Ready: Firefighting in the 19th Century
1st floor exhibit



Visit National Postal Museum
<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/10-fun-things-to-do-with-kids>



Since 1979, Discovery Theater, the unique, DC-based museum theater has served as a gateway to Smithsonian exhibitions, collections, and themes. Through the joy of live stage performances, students from pre-K through 6th grade are immersed in global cultures, eco-science, living history, and traditional arts. Discovery Theater performances are created to complement students' classroom-based learning; to enrich audiences' knowledge of the arts, history, sciences, and cultures of the world; to foster a love of live theater; and to provide entertaining, educational museum-based interactive experiences.

Don't miss the last show of the season...

Jojo's Backyard Safari

May 28th – 30th, 2025 at 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

Recommended for ages: 3– 6/ Pre-K – Grade 1



Check out our website to get your tickets now or arrange to bring these shows to your school.

www.DiscoveryTheater.org