

EXPERIENCE: "This Is My Idea" - Setting the Stage for Creativity

ARTS STRATEGIES: Drama - Using imagination, Object transformation

MATERIALS: "What Do You Do With An Idea" book, Egg shaker, box

INTRO: Many children struggle to come up with original ideas in the classroom. They will automatically repeat what another child says, or simply imitate the teacher. After all, following directions and identifying the one "correct" answer is often what children are asked to do at school. But children also need to develop their creative skills. This experience is designed to intentionally practice independent and innovative thinking, and to clearly establish a safe space in which children can present new ideas.

EXPERIENCE PROCEDURES

An Idea asks "What If?"... There is something in the box. I wonder what it could be? (children listen and make predictions) It's an idea! An idea is a thought or plan that we make, using our imaginations!

Artist reveals a colorful egg shaker to represent an "idea."

(to the tune of "Have You Ever Seen A Lassie?")

This is my idea, idea, idea!

This is my idea... I wonder? What if?

What if it's this way?

What if it's that way?

This is my idea... I wonder? What if?

Artist will show one way to tap the egg on her body while singing.

Each child will have a chance to use the "idea" prop.

Vary prompts throughout the experience to promote innovative thinking:

What if you tap it on a different body part?

What if you move it around body parts?

What if you move it in a straight line/curvy line?

What if you move it up high/down low?

What if you create a loud sound/quiet sound?

What if you work with a friend? How can you make a sound together?

Follow this experience by reading the book "What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada. The main character isn't sure what to do with an idea that follows him around. At first he ignores it, then he learns to care for his idea and help it grow. One group of children was particularly interested in what he might "feed" his idea. After much discussion, they decided they should feed the idea some "imagination" so it can grow!

Variations: Repeat the experience using various objects in the box, asking children to imagine new ways to use the item or to transform the object into other things.

What if this object was something you'd find in the kitchen?

What if you could wear this object?

What if you went on a trip to the moon - why would you bring this object?

What if you gave this object as a present - who would you give it to and why?