



Fossils

PLAYGROUP SESSION PLANNER





Play Spaces

Theme: Fossils

Fossils have been found in every continent on earth. Plants, animals, humans, footprints, animal burrows and even poo fossils have been discovered. Fossilized poo is called coprolites. Palaeontologists are scientists who study and search for fossils. Without fossils, we wouldn't know that Dinosaurs even existed. The Naracoorte Caves here in South Australia are a great spot to see and learn about fossils.

FACT:

The first dinosaur fossil was found in 1822 by a British Geologist called Gideon Mantell.



Creative Space

Make your own fossils

CHILDREN WILL NEED: A batch of salt dough (recipe below), dinosaurs, animals, plants or leaves.

INSTRUCTIONS: Pre make a batch or two of salt dough, separate into balls. Let the children choose what dinosaur, animal or plant they would like to make a fossil of. Flatten the ball slightly, then press the animal or leaf into the dough until you see an impression in the dough. You can just put footprints onto the dough. Once the impression has been made, leave aside to air dry until the next playgroup session.

EXTENSION IDEAS: Once the salt dough fossils have dried completely you can use crayons, textas or even paint to decorate your fossil.

Use a glue stick not school glue as it will make the crepe paper too wet to work with.



Play Spaces

Messy and fun outdoor activity!

Providing a diverse range of activities will support children's experience and whole developmental experience. Play spaces and activities can be set up as opportunities for free play.

Sensory Activity

Frozen Fossils

You will need: Balloons, water, small dinosaurs, pipettes, warm water, tray and a bowl.

Instructions:

Place the dinosaurs into the balloons. Fill up with water, tie off and place in the freezer to freeze overnight. When you are ready to excavate the dinosaurs, remove the fossils from the balloons and place them in the tray. Using the pipettes and warm water, squeeze the warm water over the frozen dinosaurs. Watch as the water dissolves the water and your dinosaur fossil.



Outdoor Activity

Fossil Dig



You will need: Tuff tray, sand, paint brushes, small spades, dinosaurs.

Bury the dinosaurs in the sand, using the tools to dig for the dinosaur fossils. Become a Paleontologist!

NOTE: You could make a batch of salt dough dinosaur fossils for the dig when you are making the individual fossils during the craft activity, to use in this outdoor activity instead of or with the toy dinosaurs.



Play Spaces

How to set up your Play Space...

Baby Play



Setting up a Baby Play area can be very simple. A soft mat and some pillows are a great start. Items to include could be a mirror on the wall, treasure baskets, musical instruments, surprise box with different texture materials or scarves. Board books and some open space so that baby can explore and roll.



Quiet Corner



A sensory tent or area is valuable for children who are overstimulated and need some quiet time or space away from the group. You can include pillows, a blanket, sensory toys such as glitter wands, stress balls, bubble timers, poppits, wooden fidget toys, reversible sequins cushions, books and ear muffs.

Social Space



Social spaces include role play opportunities where children can play out scenarios such as kitchens, cafes, supermarkets, doctors, florists, bakeries, airports, work bench with tools and many others. You may provide dress ups, items for sale or production or service. This can also include playing families and home making.



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Builder's Corner



Ways to set up a builders corner include duplo, cars and train sets, loose parts play, box construction, wooden blocks, stacking and building games, cup stacking, building a fort with blankets, arranging materials on a lightbox, sand play and plasticine.

Group Time

Fossils

Routines provide predictability for children

Activities to include in your Playgroup Routine

Welcome Song



Niina Marni [Niina Marni]

Niina marni? Niina marni? >> Marni'ai. Marni'ai

Wanti niina? Wanti niina? >> Wardli-ana, Wardli-ana.

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Shared Experience



Ask the children if they have ever found a fossil. Talk about the different ways they have “discovered” fossils in some of the activities, what was their favourite – digging for them or melting them? If you have any dinosaur enthusiasts at playgroup ask them to bring their favourite dinosaur and tell the rest of the group what they like most about dinosaurs. Has anyone been to Naracoorte to see the caves and all the fossils there?

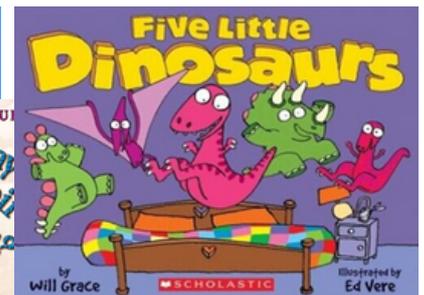
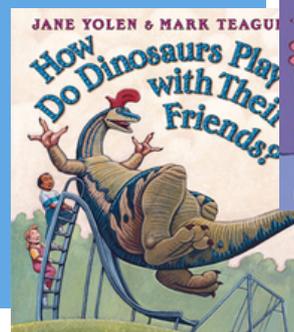
Story Time



Have a look at the local library or bookstore for:

Five Little Dinosaurs by Will Grace & Ed Vere

How do Dinosaurs play with their friends? By Jane Yolen & Mark Teague.



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Goodbye Song



Where are the children? Where are the children?

Here they are! Here they are!

We had fun at Playgroup! We had fun at Playgroup!

Bye for now, Bye for now!

Framework



Playgroup SA's Playgroup Planning Framework has been designed to ensure that there is an evidence-informed approach to the planning of activities and experiences. There are five play types drawing on Mildred Partens work, the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) domains of development are covered, and the five outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework. The Programming framework ensures that children attending Playgroup are engaged, are participating and have a diverse set of activities and experiences to support them to thrive. When programming we make sure there are opportunities for purposeful play, we think development and plan for outcomes.

Play Types

'Play' is synonymous with how children spend most of their time in the first few years of life. People of all ages benefit from play and play-based activities. Play is the central mechanism, providing a strong foundation for learning. When activities programmed at Playgroup align with each of the Play Types, children will enjoy a rich and diverse learning experience at Playgroup. When children interact and experiment in the Playgroup environment, they will better organise and make sense of the world around them as they play.



Functional Play



Construction Play



Role Play



Explorative Play



Creative Play

AEDC Domains

AEDC developmental domains help to provide a common language for families, and educators to understand and discuss outcomes through a developmental lens when children engage in different play-based activities. The AEDC domains can be particularly useful for reflecting on how individual children's development is progressing, and programming activities that work toward achieving optimal outcomes for each child. Understanding these domains of development can help families connect the activities and experiences that will support children to develop the skills in preparation for transitioning into the pre-school and school environments.



Physical health and wellbeing



Social competence



Emotional maturity



Language and cognitive skills



Communication skills and general knowledge

Early Years Learning Framework

The EYLF is used as the central framework in Early Childhood Education settings. The EYLF was designed to ensure that children in all early childhood education and care settings have access to meaningful activities and experiences that will support children's learning from birth through to five years. EYLF is Play-based and recognises families as children's first educators. A quality experience at Playgroup aligned with EYLF outcomes will ensure that children will have the best chance of positive experiences in the learning environment at school.



Outcome 1 Children have a strong sense of identity



Outcome 2 Children are connected with & contribute to their world



Outcome 3 Children have a strong sense of wellbeing



Outcome 4 Children are confident & involved learners



Outcome 5 Children are effective communicators