

Artful Stories:

A Preschool Tour Experience at the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Alphabet

Book

Elemenopeo, written by Harriet Ziefert, illustrated by Donald Saaf

Materials

- Alphabet flash cards
- Plush cat
- Alphabet box and sorting cards
- Laminated LMNOPO card
- Picture frame
- Song sheets

Suggestions

You can mix and match the themes of alphabet, dreams, portraits, and cats

Lesson

Content Objectives

- Explore a storybook and artwork in the galleries
- Explore the letters of the alphabet using works of art, laminated flashcards, sorting cards, and songs

Skill Objectives

What students will do

- Listen to and talk about a storybook
- Make theme connections from the book to works of art
- Manipulate materials related to the tour theme

What students will learn

- Language acquisition and critical thinking
- Visual perception, discrimination, and interpretation

Vocabulary

- Alphabet
- Letters
- Portrait
- Self-Portrait
- Artist
- Dream

Activities

Introduction

Museum Rules

- Looking Eyes (making circles with hands around eyes)
- Listening Ears (have children wiggle ears)
- Quiet Hands (put hands in their lap)
- Inside Voice (put finger to mouth and make “shhhh” sound)

Picture Frame Rhyme

- Can be spoken or sung to the tune of “I’m a Little Teapot”
- Pass picture frame to each child in turn
- Have them hold up the frame to their face and say/sing the following
- Repeat for each child

*“Looking through my picture frame, who do I see?
I see [INSERT NAME] looking at me!”*

Artful Kids Rhyme

- Can be spoken or sung to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”

*It’s story time at Mia
I’m so glad you’re here today
The art is here for everyone
So, let’s get ready to have some fun
We’ll sit down and read a book
And take our time to talk and look*

Alphabet Name Song

- Can be sung to the tune of “Bingo”
- Children's names that are four or five letters work best, but be creative to do this for each child
- Example using “Noah”

*There is a child that I know best
And NOAH is their name oh!
N-O-A-H
N-O-A-H
N-O-A-H
And Noah is their name oh!*

Gallery

Movement

- Using songs and motions review the alphabet through the songs attached to this curriculum
- Choose a letter/color/word for students to be on the lookout for as they walk through the galleries

- Example
 - Things that start with the letter B (boy, bug, balloon, baby, ball, etc.)

Storybook

- Introduce the story and the feline character, Elemenopeo
- Use the laminated LMNOPO card to say the letters we hear when we say Elemenopeo's name
- Compare the spelling of the book title and the letters on the cards
- Read the book *Elemenopeo* aloud
 - Make connections to the artwork in the gallery you are sitting in as Elemenopeo paints his self-portrait
 - Discuss how an artist made the artworks in the museum
 - Sometimes they created images of other people, called "portraits," other times they created pictures of themselves, called "self-portraits"
- Use the plush cat toy to read the story along with you
- Perhaps the cat can imitate Elemenopeo's actions in the storybook, look at works of art and engage in conversations with the children
 - Try using the cat as a puppet throughout the tour or as a pretend helper
 - The cat could sing songs along with the children or tell them about the rules of the museum
- Discuss the idea of dreams and imagination
 - Elemenopeo dreamt that he had wings and could fly. Ask the students what they have dreamt or imagined themselves doing that might not be possible in real life. If they could paint a self-portrait what would they paint themselves doing?
- If there's time, ask students to use their bodies and voices to imitate some of the animals mentioned in *Elemenopeo*

Looking exercises

- Position the students in front of one of the suggested works of art above or another of your choosing
- First ask a general looking question like, "What do you see?"
 - Follow up with questions about what letters the objects they see in the picture start with.
 - Review letters of the alphabet using the packet of flash cards. If they see a baby, what letter does "baby" start with? B! Use your voice to emphasize letter sounds such as: B = "buh" = baby
- Ask them each what letter their own names begins with
- Make connections between seeing a letter and making a sound
- Sing the Alphabet Song or the Alphabet Name Song while using the flashcards for review
- Play a game of "I Spy" with the children in a friendly gallery
 - You can say "I spy with my little eye, a_____."
- Have the children look around the gallery to find an artwork that has that object
- Follow up by asking what letter that object's name starts with
 - Find other objects that start with the same letter

Manipulative exercise

- Open the ABC box and spread out the laminated image cards face up

- Ask the children to select cards that begin with a letter A and put them in the box (apple, airplane, etc)
 - Images are available for the letters A, B, C, and D
- Spread out all the laminated cards face down
- Play a match game by having the students take turns turning over the cards to find the letter that matches the image
 - Example
 - D and image of Duck
- When the students make a match, have them place the matching cards in the ABC box

Songs and Poems

If Your Name Starts With...

Tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It"

If your name starts with A, turn around.
 If your name starts with B, touch the ground.
 If your name starts with C, then stand up and touch your knee.
 Clap your hands if your name starts with D.
 If your name starts with E, wink your eye.
 If your name starts with F, try to fly.
 If your name starts with G, blow a kiss up here to me.
 If your name starts with H, say "Hee, Hee".
 If your name starts with I, tap your toe.
 If your name starts with J, say "Ho, Ho".
 If your name starts with K, then stand up and start to sway.
 If your name starts with L, say "Hurray".
 If your name starts with M, make a smile.
 If your name starts with N, shake awhile.
 If your name starts with O, put your elbow on your toe.
 If your name starts with P, say "I know!"
 If your name starts with Q, raise your hand.
 If your name starts with R, you should stand.
 If your name starts with S, you should pat your head, I guess.
 If your name starts with T, say "Oh, yes!"
 If your name starts with U, touch your eye.
 If your name starts with V, pat your thigh.
 If your name starts with W, X, Y or Z, then stand up, take a bow, and say "That's me!"

Alphabet Song

A - B - C - D - E - F - G

H - I - J - K - L - M - N - O - P

Q - R - S - T - U - V

W - X - Y and Z

Now I know my A - B - C's

Next time won't you sing with me?