

About the Developmental Studies Center

Our Mission

Developmental Studies Center (DSC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to children's academic, ethical, and social development. Since 1980, DSC has developed school-based and after-school programs that help children develop capacities to think deeply and critically so they will continue learning throughout their lives and strengthen their commitment to such values as kindness, helpfulness, personal responsibility, and respect for others.

DSC's Programs Develop Skills and Community

Programs for use in classrooms

Caring School Community™ • Grades K–6

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program that builds community—in the classroom, across grades, schoolwide, and with families.

Making Meaning® • Grades K–8

The Making Meaning program is a reading comprehension curriculum that teaches comprehension strategies through read-alouds, collaborative structures, and reflective partner work.

SIPPS® (Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) • Grades K–12

The SIPPS program teaches decoding systematically. It is designed specifically for intervention and covers single-syllable decoding, short vowels, simple consonants, complex vowels, consonant digraphs, polysyllabic strategies, and high-frequency sight words.

Being a Writer™ • Grades K–5

The Being a Writer program is a yearlong writing curriculum—the first program of its kind to bring together the latest research in teaching writing with support for students' social and ethical development. (Available August 2007)

Programs for out-of-school time

AfterSchool KidzLit® • Grades K–8

The AfterSchool KidzLit program is a literacy enrichment program consisting of terrific read-aloud books, and discussions and activities that help kids make connections between the stories, their own lives, and the world.

AfterSchool KidzMath™ • Grades K–6

The AfterSchool KidzMath program provides academic enrichment using cooperative math games and literature-based activities. Kids deepen their understanding and practice important math skills—and have fun.

Science Explorer • Grades K–6

Science Explorer is an inquiry-based, interactive program of experiments using ordinary materials that inspire students to explore scientific principles.

Math Explorer • Grades 6–8

Math Explorer invites children to fly planes, launch rockets, learn card tricks, and make cool stuff to take home—all while practicing the important math skills middle-school students need extra help with.

For more information, please visit www.devstu.org or contact us by phone at 800.666.7270.



**DEVELOPMENTAL
STUDIES CENTER™**

Nonprofit. Research Based. Mission Driven. Since 1980.

At-Home Science

Before Sending Home the Activity

Have a discussion about what scientists “do.” Explain that for this activity students will be scientists at home, choosing something from nature to observe closely. Have students brainstorm some science objects they might find at home and outdoors in their neighborhoods, and emphasize that *what* they pick is not as important as *how* they look at them or think about them—that’s what makes them “science” objects.

Choose an object—a plant, a rock, a shell, or a classroom animal or insect—and have the whole class observe and describe it.

Follow-Up

Have volunteers display their objects and/or drawings and describe what they learned. Have students share with the class what else they would like to learn about their objects, and have the class discuss how one could find answers to those questions. If possible, have the students choose one or two of those questions to explore further in science class.



At-Home Science

Dear Family Member or Family Friend,

Children are natural scientists, often without realizing it. Like scientists, children are curious about the world and interested in observing its smallest details. Objects and events worthy of scientific study are all around us, and in this activity you can use these to help your child develop “scientific” skills.

With your child, find something in nature to observe at home, and then your child can describe it to our class at school. Your child may even find something that could be brought to school for our classroom science center. Please use the Activity Starters to help your child observe and describe a natural object—just like a scientist does!

Thanks for your time, and have fun!

Activity Starters

- 1** Explore nature with your child, either inside your home or outside. You won’t need to go far to find plenty of interesting things to look at—plants, trees, vegetables, gravel, insects, sticks, rocks, water, and so on. Ask your child to choose something that he or she would like to look at closely and learn more about.

With your child, talk about what he or she chose. Ask such questions as:
 - Why did you choose this?
 - What interests you most about it?
 - What different parts does it have?
 - Where do you think it came from?
 - What do you notice about it?
 - What words can describe it (for example, hard, soft, smooth, bumpy, heavy)?
 - What do you wonder about it? What would you like to know about it?
- 2** Have your child draw a picture of the object he or she chose. Then help your child write one or two things that he or she would like to learn about it. If possible, have your child bring the object to school with the Homeside Activity sheet.

HOMESIDE ACTIVITY



Have your child draw a picture of the object he or she chose. Then help your child write one or two things that he or she would like to learn about it.

Comments

After you have completed this activity, each of you please sign your name and the date below. If you have any comments, please write them in the space provided.

Signatures

Date

Please have your child return this activity to school. Thank you.



Ciencia casera

Estimados padres, familiares o amigos:

Los niños son científicos por naturaleza, muchas veces sin darse cuenta. Al igual que los científicos, tienen mucha curiosidad por el mundo que les rodea y mucho interés en observar sus más pequeños detalles. A todo nuestro alrededor se encuentran objetos y eventos que merecen estudio científico. En esta actividad, puede utilizar estos objetos naturales para ayudarle a su hijo o a su hija a desarrollar sus habilidades “científicas.”

Busquen juntos algún objeto del mundo natural para observar en casa. Luego en la escuela, su hijo o su hija nos contará del objeto.

También es posible que encuentre algo que pueda traer a la escuela para nuestro “Centro de ciencias” de la clase. Haga el favor de utilizar las indicaciones a continuación para ayudarle a su hijo o a su hija a observar y a describir un objeto natural—¡tal como lo hace un científico!

Gracias por su atención y ¡que se diviertan!

Indicaciones para la actividad

- 1 Explore la naturaleza con su hija o con su hijo, ya sea dentro de su casa o su apartamento, o afuera. No necesitarán ir muy lejos para encontrar muchas cosas interesantes que observar: plantas, árboles, hortalizas, piedrecitas, insectos, palos, rocas, agua, etc. Pídale a su hija o a su hijo que escoja algo que le gustaría observar con cuidado y conocer mejor.

Conversen sobre lo que él o lo que ella ha elegido. Hágle preguntas como éstas:

- ¿Por qué escogiste esto?
- ¿Qué es lo que más te interesa de esto?
- ¿Qué partes distintas puedes distinguir en este objeto?
- ¿De dónde crees que viene esto?
- ¿Qué detalles puedes observar?
- ¿Qué palabras puedes usar para describirlo (por ejemplo: duro, suave, liso, áspero, pesado)?
- ¿Qué te preguntas sobre este objeto?
¿Qué más te gustaría saber acerca de este objeto?

- 2 Pídale a su hija o a su hijo que haga un dibujo del objeto que seleccionó. Luego ayúdele a escribir una o dos cosas que quisiera aprender acerca de él. Si es posible, pídale que lleve el objeto mismo a la escuela, junto con esta hoja.

ACTIVIDAD FAMILIAR



Invite a su hijo o a su hija a hacer un dibujo del objeto que seleccionó. Luego ayúdele a escribir una o dos cosas que le gustaría aprender acerca de él.

Comentarios

Después que hayan completado esta actividad, haga el favor cada uno de firmar y de escribir la fecha en el lugar indicado. Si Ud. quisiera hacer cualquier comentario, por favor escríbalo aquí.

Firmas

Fecha

Favor de enviar esta actividad de vuelta a la escuela con su hijo o con su hija. Muchísimas gracias.