

Fashions, Beauty, and Barber Shop

A Project by 5- and 6-Year-Old Kindergarten Children
at Freeburg Early Childhood Program, Cedar Falls, Iowa

Length of Project: 4 weeks

Teachers: Sherice Hetrick-Ortman & Shirley Bruce

Phase One

Beginning the Project

Brightly colored scarves had been donated to the classroom and placed in the pretend play area. Faith was inspired by the fabric and began draping the scarves over furniture, creating an attractive cove for artistic expression. La'tece became interested in what Faith was doing. Faith had an idea, "Let's make a beauty shop." "Yeah!" said La'tece, "That's a good idea." The excitement generated by Faith and La'tece caught the attention of two more girls in the classroom. All four girls began moving furniture around in the pretend play area. They removed items they did not need (food stuff, baby beds, cooking utensils) and began stocking the shop with combs, brushes, and mirrors.

Phase Two

Developing the Project

A web about barber and beauty shops was created, and the teachers noticed areas of interest and brought in related items. Sherice and Shirley supplied the shop with lotions, empty shampoo bottles, blow dryers and curling irons (with the cords removed), fake nails, and gemstone stickers for ear piercing or nail decoration. After experiencing the shop for a day, the teachers realized that rules needed to be written.

The children were ready to open the shop up to the public. The children wrote the name of the customer, date of the appointment, and service requested (style, wash, nails) in an appointment book. Children cut out and put up pictures from hair-styling magazines on the walls of their shop. The class decided to change the name of the shop to Fashions, Beauty, and Barber Shop because the boys said they went to a barber shop to get their hair cut not a beauty shop. La'tece created a sign that read, La'tece's Prices (HARWRSH 11.00, RAP 12.00). Faith made a sign that read, Nals by Faith. Literacy was supported throughout the project. Children were inspired to write about the shop in their journals. Class books written by children were compiled and placed in our classroom library.

A field site visit to the College of Hair Design was scheduled. Brayden's representational drawing of a massage table inspired the class to add massages and shaves to the list of services our shop provided. Children, teachers, and support staff came in regularly to schedule an appointment. The class would meet as a group and discuss how much money had been made at the end of the day.

Phase Three

Concluding the Project

The project lost its momentum after week four. The appointments began to dwindle, and supply and demand was apparent when we ran out of hair tattoos. In a class meeting, the children voted to change the pretend play area into something other than a beauty/barber shop.

Comments

The Fashions, Beauty, and Barber Shop quickly became a project and brought the community of our classroom together in a way that it never had before. The topic came entirely from the children and provided a catalyst for meaningful learning across the curriculum. The project proved to be the most successful experience in building inter- and intra-personal skills among all children in our classroom.

If the project were done again, information about inventors/history would have been included. The first African American woman who invented the flat iron was never presented, but we had planned to discuss her.



“Today I want to be the receptionist. I want to schedule appointments.”
Lacey



Jessica requested a full set of fake nails. Darryon initially counted out a set of nine, but realized he needed one more.