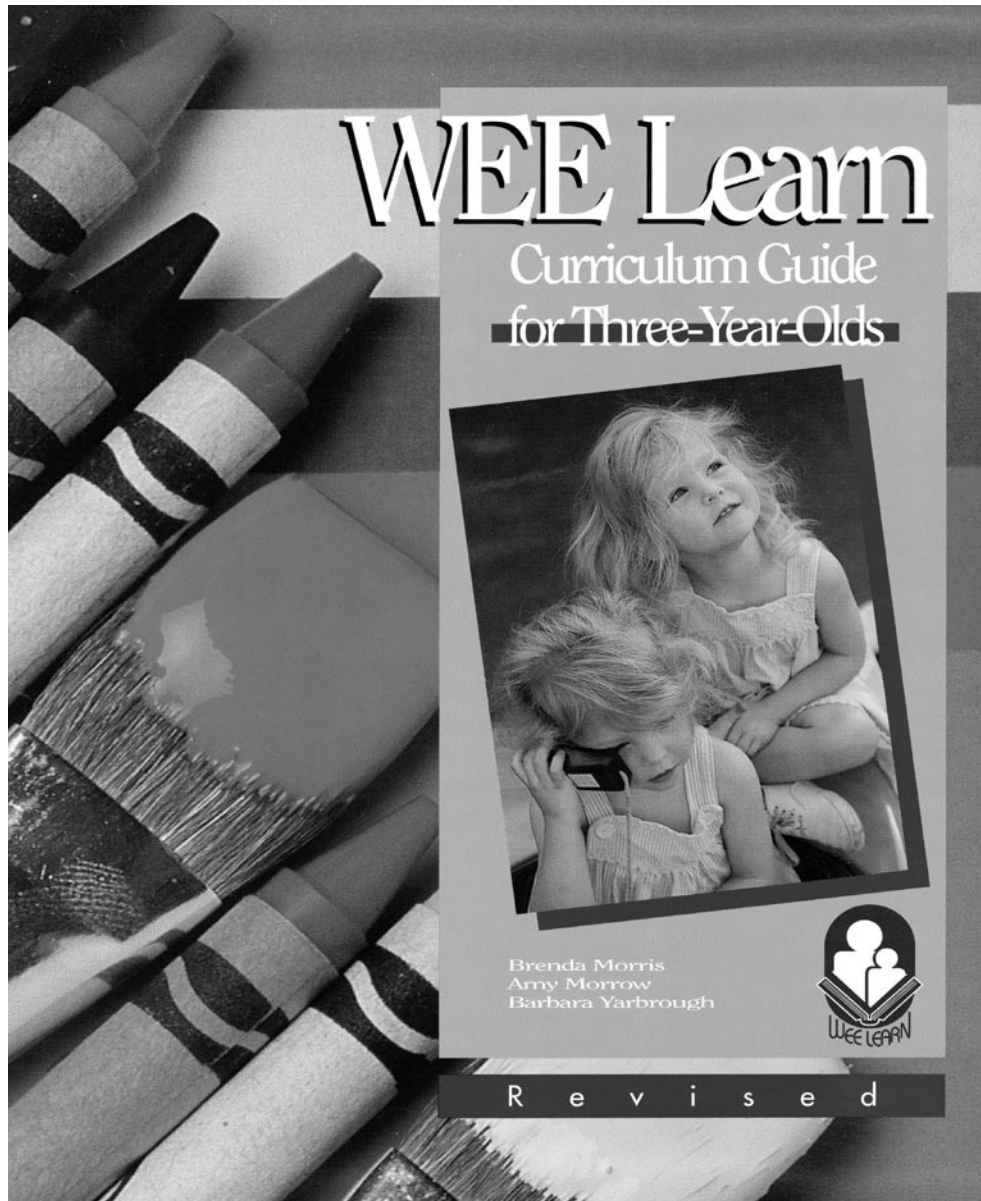


Sample Meeting



NOTE: The type on the actual product is much clearer than the sample.

For more information about WEE Learn go online at lifeway.com/kids and click on WEE Learn in the topical index or e-mail Mikey.Oldham@lifeway.com or call Mikey Oldham at 615-251-2841.

TO ORDER WEE LEARN MATERIALS:

Mail Orders: LifeWay Church Resources Customer Service
One LifeWay Plaza
Nashville, TN 37234-0113

FAX Orders: 615-251-5933

E-mail Orders: Customerservice@lifeway.com

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Resources

WEE Learn Curriculum Guide for Three-Year-Olds, Revised

Item #001116136 • \$129.95

This 672-page guide provides materials for a framework on which teachers can build an early childhood program that allows children to grow and develop as Jesus did—mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually (Luke 2:52).

This guide provides a range of activities designed to meet the needs of three-year-olds at their level of development. This guide also provides guidance and activities in each unit to help each child develop language, reading, writing, and math skills appropriate to his or her stage of development.

This guide is developed around themes that provide opportunities for children to learn about God's world and how to live in it. Activities which embrace physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual development are included under each theme topic. The themes are designed to help lay a foundation for understanding God, Jesus, Bible, church, self, family, others, and community and world.

Each unit teaches through learning centers and group times and includes home activities and parent letters.

WEE Learn Teaching Pictures for Three-Year-Olds

Item #001116126 • \$19.95

This pack includes 48 pictures, both biblical and present-day.

Other WEE Learn resources:

WEE Learn Curriculum Guide for Infants and Toddlers • Item #001116597 • \$139.95

WEE Learn Curriculum Guide for Two-Year-Olds • Item #001116518 • \$129.95

WEE Learn Teaching Pictures for Two-Year-Olds • Item #001116519 • \$22.9

WEE Learn Curriculum Guide for Pre-K • Item #005035404 • \$219.95

WEE Learn Teaching Pictures for Pre-K • Item #005035405 • \$24.95

UNIT 3

I Am Special

Purpose

The purpose of this unit is to guide children toward the awareness that God made each of them unique and that they are growing, changing, and becoming more competent each day.

Concepts to Be Emphasized

- There is no one exactly like me.
- God made me special.
- I am always growing and changing.
- The name I have was chosen for me.
- Some people have special needs such as wearing hearing aids, braces, or eyeglasses.

Guidance Tips

Each child you teach is a unique, special, one-of-a-kind person. This is something we teachers know but sometimes forget to practice. Instead of planning for individuals, we plan for groups. Instead of remembering that children develop at different rates spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially, we base our expectations on a list of age-level characteristics. During this unit make a special effort to observe the children closely. Prepare lesson plans based on the unique interests and developmental needs of specific children.

Personally greet each child at the door every morning. As the child works during the day, offer encouraging comments that include his name.

Do you teach children who have mental or physical disabilities? How many cultures are represented in your group? Think about what can be learned from these individuals. A child with a disability can help preschoolers realize that a task can be accomplished in more than one way. Invite families of various cultures to share special foods, music, and customs. Remember that your attitudes, behavior, and prejudices toward others influence the attitudes of your children.

Spiritual Emphasis

Bible Verses and Bible Thoughts

"God is good to us" (Ps. 73:1).

"God loves us" (Ps. 107:1).

"God made me" (Ps. 139:14).

"I thank God" (2 Tim. 1:3).

Bible Story

Jesus and the Children

Jesus and the Children

(Based on Matt. 19:13-14; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-16)

People, people, people. The people followed Jesus wherever He went. Some of the people were sick, and they wanted Jesus to make them well. Other people wanted to ask Jesus questions.

Jesus talked with the people. He told them that God loved them and cared for them. Jesus told the people that He wanted to be their friend. Jesus loved the people.

Mothers and daddies took their children to see Jesus. Some of Jesus' helpers said to the mothers and daddies:

"Take these children away. Jesus is busy. He does not have time for children."

The mothers were sad. The daddies were sad. The children were sad.

Jesus heard what His helpers said. "Let the children come to Me. Do not send them away," Jesus told the men.

Jesus gently touched each boy and girl. He talked with the children and held them in His arms. Jesus showed the people that He loved the children. Jesus thanked God for the mothers and daddies who brought the children to Him.



Learning Centers

Art Center



Print the title "I Am Special" on a colorful piece of sentence strip paper. Post the words at the children's eye level. When the activity "Enjoying Finger Painting" is completed, hang it above the sentence strip. Throughout the week look for opportunities to read the title "I Am Special." Help the children find their handprints and names on the display.

Painting at the Easel

Provide red, yellow, and blue tempera paint for the easel. Before a child paints, talk about using three different colors. Remind him to put the red paintbrush back in the red paint container and so forth. As the child paints with the three colors, he might make other colors. For example, when yellow is painted over red, the color becomes orange. When yellow is painted over blue, the color becomes green.

Little Blue and Little Yellow is a book children may enjoy after painting with the three primary colors.

Pasting Facial Features

Prepare Ahead: Cut 8-inch paper circles (or use paper plates). Cut shapes to represent eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. Include several colors for eyes (blue, green, brown) and various shapes for mouths to express sad, happy, excited, and angry feelings. Provide paste and crayons.

To prepare the children for this activity, look at a book that shows pictures of faces. The book *Make a Face* includes a mirror so the reader can watch his own face. As you look at the book together, talk about how feelings change the way a mouth looks. Talk about the differences in the

facial features of the children in the group. For example, talk about eye color, hair texture and color, and skin tones. Thank God for giving each person a different face.

Show each child the paper circles and facial feature shapes. Help him count the shapes he will need to make a face picture—two eyes, two ears, one nose, and one mouth. Look in a mirror and talk about where facial features are positioned. After the child pastes the shapes, suggest using crayons to add hair. When he finishes, help him label his work with his name.

Enjoying Finger Painting

Provide a jar of red finger paint, spoon, sponge, pan of water, and plastic paint smocks. If the art table has a laminated-plastic top, use the paint directly on the table. If the table is wood, provide large serving trays.

Encourage the children to help one another put on paint smocks. Follow these steps for finger painting:

1. Wipe the tabletop or tray with a wet sponge.
2. Drop a spoonful of finger paint at each child's painting space.
3. Invite a child to use her fingers, hands, and arms to rub the paint and make designs.
4. Save the child's picture by helping her lay

a sheet of newsprint over the paint to transfer the design to paper.

5. Show the child how to clasp both hands together in front as she walks to the sink to wash after she finishes painting.

Note: If you plan to do the activity "Making a Handprint Mural" following this activity, use the directions for that activity rather than asking the children to wash their hands.

Making a Handprint Mural

➡ *Prepare Ahead:* Cut a large strip of white paper and lay it on a table near the center.

Involve the children in making a handprint mural to display in the center. After the children finish their finger painting in the previous activity and before they wash their hands, help them press their hands on the white paper to make handprints. Help the children print their names under their handprints.

As the children work, talk about how each child's print looks different. Sing the first stanza of the song "There's No One Exactly Like Me."

Making Paper-Bag Puppets

➡ *Prepare Ahead:* Provide lunch-sized paper bags, wallpaper and wrapping paper scraps, crayons, and paste. Cut shapes representing items of clothing from the paper scraps. Include shapes of shirts, pants, and dresses. Cut them large enough to fit a puppet made from lunch bag.

Help each child find the flap side of the bottom of a bag. The child uses crayons to draw a face and hair on the bottom flap. She then spreads paste on the back of the paper clothes and turns them over to attach them to the paper-bag puppet.

When the puppets are finished, talk with the child through the puppet. For example, make comments and ask questions such as: Hello, Puppet. What's your name? How old are you? How are you feeling today? What do you like to do at preschool?

Playing with Play Dough

➡ *Prepare Ahead:* Make play dough using one of the recipes in the Appendix. Prepare enough play dough so each child can have a sufficient amount to make a handprint. If the art table has a laminated-plastic top, use the dough directly on the table. If the table is wooden, provide large serving trays. Display the teaching picture "Playing with Friends."

Call attention to the teaching picture. Talk about what the two girls might be making with play dough.

Involve the children in helping divide the dough into a ball for each friend who will participate. Use conversation that includes questions such as: How many boys and girls will play with the dough? How many balls of dough will we need? How can we be sure each one of you gets some dough to use? Ask the children to work with you as you try to divide the big lump of dough into smaller lumps of fairly equal size.

Invite the children to make whatever they want with the dough. If they seem interested, show them how to flatten the dough and make handprints or fingerprints. If the children are taking the prints home, allow several days for the dough to air dry and harden.

Drawing on Paper Shapes

➡ *Prepare Ahead:* Collect various colors and types of paper. Tear or cut the paper into a variety of large shapes such as triangles, rectangles, circles, and ovals. Tear or cut small shapes inside the large shapes. Provide crayons.

Invite the children to use the crayons and their imaginations to draw pictures around the open spaces on the shapes. Say: "God is good to us. He gives us eyes to see colors and shapes."

Learning Centers

Block Center



Before teaching this unit, take photographs of the children as they work in the block center. Mount the photos on colorful sheets of construction paper. Print a statement about each photo. Be sure to include the names of the children in the statement. For example, print: "Eric and Jessica built a long road. They worked hard and had fun together."

Using Stand-Up Figures

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Make stand-up figures using photographs of the children you teach. Attach each photo to a cardboard tube or small block of wood. (The holders for stand-up figures may have been prepared for the block center in unit 2.) Print each child's name on a strip of paper and glue it below the photograph. Stand the figures on the block shelf.

As the children use the stand-up figures, talk with them about the ways the friends in your class are alike or different. Point to the names and read them with the children.

Sing the song "There's No One Exactly Like Me."

Building with Boxes

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Gather cardboard boxes in a variety of sizes. Include large and small boxes. Stack the boxes near the block shelf.

Watch as the children stack boxes on top of or inside other boxes. Comment on the way they are growing stronger as they work. For example, say: "Takumi, you have been working a long time to stack the boxes. I saw you lifting and carrying the boxes. Your arms are growing stronger."

As the children work, sing the song "Every Day I'm Getting Bigger."

Playing House

A variety of dollhouses is available from school supply houses. If funds are available, purchase a dollhouse that meets the needs of the children you teach.

With your guidance, the children can build a house with unit blocks. Provide family stand-up figures to stimulate building a house. Talk with the children about their families and their homes. Be sensitive to various types of family units. Some children may be adopted; others may live with grandparents or foster parents. Say: "God loves us. He gave us family members to love us and take care of us."

Labeling Buildings

Observe as the children build. While some threes will build structures and name them, others will simply stack blocks in a tower effect or arrange them in rows.

When a child finishes building, offer to help make a label for the building. If the child tells you what his structure is, comment: "You built a big school, Andrew. Would you like for me to help you put a sign on it?" If the child is interested, print words to make a sign. As you print, say each letter and read the words. For example, as you print "Andrew's Preschool," say: "A-n-d-r-e-w-'s,

Andrew's." If a child does not name her structure, offer to make a name label. For example, print the label "Jessica's Block Building."

Setting Up a Shoe Store

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Gather shoe boxes and a variety of kinds of shoes for men, women, and children. Provide large, cardboard boxes; a toy cash register; paper play money; and a box of sign-making materials.

When the children express an interest in the items, talk with them about times they have shopped for shoes. Work with the children to use the unit blocks or large cardboard boxes

to build shelves for the shoes. Help make signs for the store such as "Open," "Closed," and "Preschool Shoe Store."

Be aware of each child's level of development as you observe and guide play. Because shopping for shoes is a familiar experience for three-year-olds, they may decide to have a sales clerk, cashier, and customers. However, play might not be this organized. If the children are interested in building a shoe store, guide them as they build shelves, stack shoe boxes, and try on shoes. Give children time and opportunity to create their own play situations if they are not interested in shoe-store play.



Learning Centers

Book and Listening Center



Arrange the center to provide private spaces for children to look at books alone. For example, arrange several pillows in a corner of the room or bring a large refrigerator carton. Use bed pillows with removable pillowcases to allow for easy cleaning.

Look through the books from previous units. Remove books that are no longer interesting to the children. Leave favorite books on the bookrack.

Hearing About Being Special

Select books that will help the children develop an awareness that they are special, one-of-a-kind people. The following books focus on individuality: *The Important Book*; *Bright Eyes, Brown Skin*; *Happy Birthday to Me*; *Big Like Me*; *Koala Lou*; *We Are All Alike . . . We Are All Different*; *A Special Kind of Me*; and *Now I Am Three!* When reading these books to girls and boys, pause to listen as they tell you about themselves. Talk with children about the beauty of their skin, hair, eyes, and voice.

Pray thanking God for making each of us a special person.

Enjoying a Name Book

Prepare Ahead: Purchase a photograph album with self-adhesive pages. With parents' permission take a photograph of each child or send a note home requesting that parents send a photo to school. Include the following message in the note: "We are working on a book about our names. Please talk with your child about how her name was chosen. Write a note to us with this information just in case your child forgets. We will use this information to make a book that tells how the children's

names were chosen. Thank you for helping us."

As the children bring their photographs, place them in the photo album. Under each child's photo, print a message that tells about her name. For example, print: "This is Andrea Michelle Hughes. She likes to be called Andrea. Andrea's parents chose her name before she was born. The name *Andrea* is her grandmother's name. The name *Michelle* is the name of a favorite friend. Andrea is proud to have the same name as her grandmother."

Make a title page for the book that includes the following type of information:

The Name Book

Written by children, parents, and teachers
Avondale Baptist Church Preschool
(City, State)
(Date the book is finished)

When reading the book to the children, read this page, too. Say: "We worked hard to write this book. People who write books are called authors. We are the authors of this book!"

This book will likely be a favorite; consider leaving it in the center throughout the year. After the children hear you read the book, they can look at the photos and read the book themselves.

Relating Books to Experiences

Collect several books that help children learn concepts, solve problems, and draw conclusions. Several concept books that relate to this unit are *My Best Shoes*, *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, *Early Words*, and *Can You Guess?* As you read these books, help the children relate the content of each book to their personal experiences.

Sing the song "Every Day I'm Getting Bigger."

Learning About Authors

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Gather several books by the author Mercer Mayer. The adventures of Little Critter, the main character of Mercer Mayer's books, are experiences three-year-olds can relate to their own lives. A variety of titles is listed on the resource page. Be sure to include these books: *All By Myself*, *When I Grow Up*, *Just a Mess*, *The New Baby*, *I Just Forgot*, and *Just a Rainy Day*. Place the books in a basket or a box. Make a label "Mercer Mayer" and attach it to the basket. Look for information about Mercer Mayer on book jackets and in reference books about authors. Locate a photograph of the author and make a photocopy. Make a sign "Mercer Mayer." Display the photograph with the sign.

After reading the children several of Mercer

Mayer's books, show them his name on the sign. Explain that the author of these books is named Mercer Mayer. He is the person who wrote the books. Show Mercer Mayer's picture. If the children seem interested, tell them a little about Mercer Mayer.

This may be some three-year-olds' introduction to the concept of an author. As you use the word *author* throughout the year and involve the children in helping write class books, they will gradually develop an understanding that an author is a person who writes books.

Listening to Story Tapes

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Make a cassette tape of one of Mercer Mayer's books. Remember to include a signal to help the children know when to turn the page. Place the cassette tape in the tape player and lay the book nearby.

Gain insight into a child's knowledge about how books work by watching as he listens to the tape and looks at the book. As you observe, jot down notes that help answer questions such as: Does the child open the book from the front or the back? Does he hold the book right side up? Does the child turn the pages in response to the signal? Does the child try to follow the print with his finger?

Learning Centers

Homeliving Center



Display the teaching picture “God Made Me Special” at the children’s eye level. Print the Bible thought “God loves us” (Psalm 107:1) on a strip of paper and post it below the picture. In a magazine rack near the rocking chair place several magazines with pictures of preschoolers. For example, include *ParentLife*, *Look and Listen*, and *Growing*.

Looking in a Mirror

Place an unbreakable, full-length mirror near the dress-up clothes. As the children look at themselves in the mirror, help them notice things like the length and color of hair, color of eyes, number of teeth, and height. As two friends stand in front of the mirror, help them notice features that are alike and some that are different. Emphasize that no two people are exactly alike. Say: “God made each person different. It is good to like the way God made you.”

Sing the song “There’s No One Exactly Like Me.”

Making Handprint Cookies

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Gather the ingredients for the recipe for sugar cookies found in the Appendix. Provide flour or waxed paper, several rolling pins, and a table knife.

Include the children in helping make the sugar cookie dough. Chill the dough overnight. The next day work with two or three children at a time to make cookies from the outline of their hands. Clean the top of the table and coat it with flour (or provide a piece of waxed paper for each child). Give each child a portion of the

dough and a rolling pin. Help her coat the rolling pin with flour and roll out the dough until it is smooth and flat. Ask her to place her hand on the dough. Use the knife to cut around her hand. Place the dough handprints on a cookie sheet and bake. Serve for snack.

As the boys and girls work, talk with them about how special they are. Thank God for giving us hands.

Setting the Table

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Spread a large piece of oilcloth or vinyl on the table in the kitchen area. Use a permanent felt-tip marker to trace the outlines of place settings directly on the cloth. Stack plastic utensils, plates, and cups in the cabinet.

Show the children how to set the table by following the outlines on the tablecloth. As the children work, they are practicing the skills of sorting, classifying, counting, and one-to-one matching. They are also learning about spatial relationships—*beside*, *next to*, *above*, and *below*.

Setting the table is a daily job that is just right for three-year-olds. Compliment them on the work they are doing. Remind them that setting the table is a way they can help their families.

Playing with Dolls

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Provide several dolls that represent the various ethnic groups in your preschool class. If you have children with disabilities, purchase adaptive equipment for the dolls such as a hearing aid, eyeglasses, walker, leg braces, crutches, or wheelchair.

As the children play with the dolls, help them notice ways they are alike and different. Call attention to hair, eye, and skin color. Talk about why a person might need eyeglasses or a hearing aid. Comment: "All of our dolls are different just like each of us is different. God is good to us. He made each of us special."

Playing Bedtime

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Arrange a sleeping bag or blanket and a pillow in the corner of the center. Put several bedtime storybooks on the pillow. Place a towel, washcloth, soap, and a pan with a small amount of water on a table.

These items may stimulate playing "going to bed." Suggest that the children wash their hands and faces as they prepare for bedtime. Comment: "Every day you're growing bigger. You can help keep your body clean. Keeping your body clean helps you stay healthy." Sing the song "Every Day I'm Getting Bigger."

Offer to read a child a bedtime story before he pretends to sleep. If the child is putting a doll to bed, he might enjoy reading a bedtime story to the doll.



Learning Centers

Music Center



Make a rebus chart of the song "I Know He Cares for Me." Print the phrase "When I smell of a" and attach a picture of a rose after the last word. Below the picture, print a label "pretty rose." Continue in this manner attaching pictures for "buzzing bee," "kitten's fur," and "birds in a tree." Prop the song chart near the cassette tape recorder at the children's eye level.

Crawling to Music

Prepare Ahead: Place masking tape on the floor in long, straight lines. Choose a cassette tape of music that has several selections of slow and fast tempos. For example, use the cassette *Modern Tunes for Rhythms and Instruments*.

Play the cassette of music and ask the children to crawl along the tape as they listen. Look for an opportunity to help children develop an awareness that their muscles grow stronger when they exercise. For example, remark: "Stephanie, your hands, arms, and legs are working hard. When you crawl, you exercise your muscles and they grow stronger."

Sing the song "Every Day I'm Getting Bigger."

Singing a Rebus Song

Point to the words on the rebus chart and sing the song "I Know He Cares for Me." If this is a familiar song, the children may sing along with you. If the song is new to the children, ask them to sing along with the part of the song that has pictures. After singing the song as part of group time, the children will become more familiar with the words. As the children become more familiar with the song, encourage them to help you point to the words and the pictures on the rebus chart.

Recording a Song

Prepare Ahead: During a group time, record the children as they sing the song "There's No One Exactly Like Me." Place the cassette tape in the tape player.

Show the children how to start and stop the tape player. Remind them to start the tape and listen or sing along with the whole song before they push the stop button. After the children sing along, offer to help them record their voices as they sing the song by themselves or with a friend. When the children finish recording, offer to read a favorite book about being special.

Moving to Music

Play a cassette of music that has a rhythmic beat and words children can learn easily. Choose a cassette that relates to the unit theme such as *Getting to Know Myself*. The songs on this cassette introduce young children to the concepts of body image, position in space, names of body parts, feelings, and moods. Place the cassette in the tape player.

Invite the children to sing along with the music. As the children sing and move, watch them and make observational notes relating to their knowledge of body parts and spatial relationships.

Matching Voices and Pictures

Prepare Ahead: Use a blank cassette tape to record each child speaking. To prevent the children from feeling uncomfortable as they talk, ask questions such as: What is your name? What do you like about preschool? What do you like to play when you go outside? Place the cassette tape in the tape player. Arrange

photographs of the children around the tape player by placing them in a box lid or attaching them to the wall at the children's eye level.

As the cassette tape of voices is played, ask the children to try to find a picture of the friend who is talking. Comment that each voice sounds different. Say: "God is good to us. He gave each of us a different voice."



Learning Centers

Nature and Science Center



Place the poetry book *A Special Kind of Me* in a basket in the center. At the children's eye level display pictures of children of various sizes and ethnic groups. Print the Bible thought "God made me" (Psalm 139:14) on a strip of paper and post it near the pictures.

Looking at a Skeleton

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Locate a model of a human skeleton. Gather information books about the function and purpose of bones. An example is *Skeletons! Skeletons! All About Bones*.

Look at the skeleton model with the children. Ask each child to feel the bones in her head, arms, fingers, and toes. Look through information books with the children to learn more about bones. The book *Skeletons! Skeletons! All About Bones* has many facts about human and animal skeletons. Because the book is filled with illustrations, the children can enjoy looking at it with your guidance.

Weighing and Measuring

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Prepare a name card for each child. Bring a set of bathroom scales. Arrange these items near the book *A Special Kind of Me*. Starting at the floor vertically attach several long strips of adding machine tape to the wall.

Show the children the picture on the cover of the book *A Special Kind of Me*. Explain that the teacher is measuring the boys and girls to see how tall they are. Suggest that the class might enjoy this activity. Ask a child to stand

against a strip of adding machine tape with his feet flat on the floor. Draw a horizontal line across the adding machine tape to record the child's height. Give the child his name card and help him attach it beside the line that represents his height. Weigh him and print his weight on his name card.

As you work, talk with the children about how each one is special. For example, say: "God made each of us a different size. Some people are tall and some are short. All people are exactly the size God intended them to be." Sing the second stanza of the song "There's No One Exactly Like Me."

Comparing Eye Color

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Prepare a chart with the title "What Color Are Our Eyes?" Divide the chart into columns. Prepare a column for each eye color (blue, brown, green) represented by the children and teachers. Glue pictures of eyes at the top of each column. Make a picture-name card for each child by printing the child's name and pasting his picture beside his name. Provide a handheld mirror, crayons, and paste.

As the children come to the center, show them the chart. Look in the mirror with each child and talk about the color of his eyes. Help the child find his name card. Ask him to use his own

writing to sign his name below the printed name on the card. Show him how to spread paste on the back of the card and position it on the chart in the column which corresponds to his eye color.

When the chart is finished, help the children count the number of friends with blue, brown, and green eyes. Thank God for giving us beautiful eyes.

Grouping by Association

➡ Prepare Ahead: Fill a basket with objects that relate to personal hygiene or clothing. Examples are a toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss; comb, brush, mirror, empty shampoo bottle; nail brush, shoe brush, bath brush; rings, gloves, mittens; scarf, hat, helmet, beret; and boots, slippers, sandals, tennis shoes. Mix up all the items.

Help the children learn to group objects by association. For example, say: "I see some things that help keep our teeth clean. Let's put all those things together." "I see some things we wear on our feet. Let's put all those things together." After guiding two or three groupings, pause and give the children time to think for themselves. (Keep your eye on small objects. Some threes are still tempted to put objects in their mouths.)

Sorting Shoes

➡ Prepare Ahead: Collect an assortment of various sizes, colors, and types of shoes. Include shoes for men, women, children, and babies and shoes with laces, buckles, and Velcro.

Introduce the activity by helping the children sort the shoes by color. Then ask: "Can you think of other ways to sort the shoes?" If the children have trouble coming up with categories, suggest sorting the shoes by big/middle-sized/small, men/women/children/baby, high heels/low heels. With the help of an adult, a precocious three-year-old can arrange the shoes from heaviest to lightest or biggest to smallest.



Learning Centers

Puzzles and Manipulatives Center



Display the teaching picture "Jesus and the Children" at the children's eye level. Insert a ribbon in the Read-to-Me Bible at Matthew 19 to mark the story "Jesus and the Children." Lay the Bible near the puzzle rack.

Working Wooden Puzzles

Provide puzzles that show pictures of children. Include puzzles of both boys and girls of various ethnic groups. For example, include "Boy," "Girl," "This Is My Body," and "I'm Glad to Be Me." As the children work the puzzles, look for an opportunity to talk with them about the unique qualities of their bodies. Use the Bible thought "God is good to us" (Ps. 73:1) in conversation.

Making Felt Faces

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Cut several oval face shapes from felt. Select felt that represents natural skin tones. Also cut felt shapes to represent hair, nose, eyes, mouth, and ears. Provide two or three different colors of hair and eyes and a handheld mirror. Display the teaching picture "God Made Me Special."

When a child seems interested in the activity, briefly talk about the teaching picture. Look in the mirror with the child. Talk about where his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth are located. Thank God for his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Invite the child to use the felt pieces to make various kinds of faces.

Lacing Beads

Provide a set of laces and large, wooden beads. Watch as a child laces. Talk about the colors she is using. If the child seems ready, show her how to lace beads to form a two-part pattern such as red-blue/red-blue or yellow-red/yellow-red. When the child finishes lacing, help her read her pattern from left to right: "Red-blue/red-blue/red-blue."

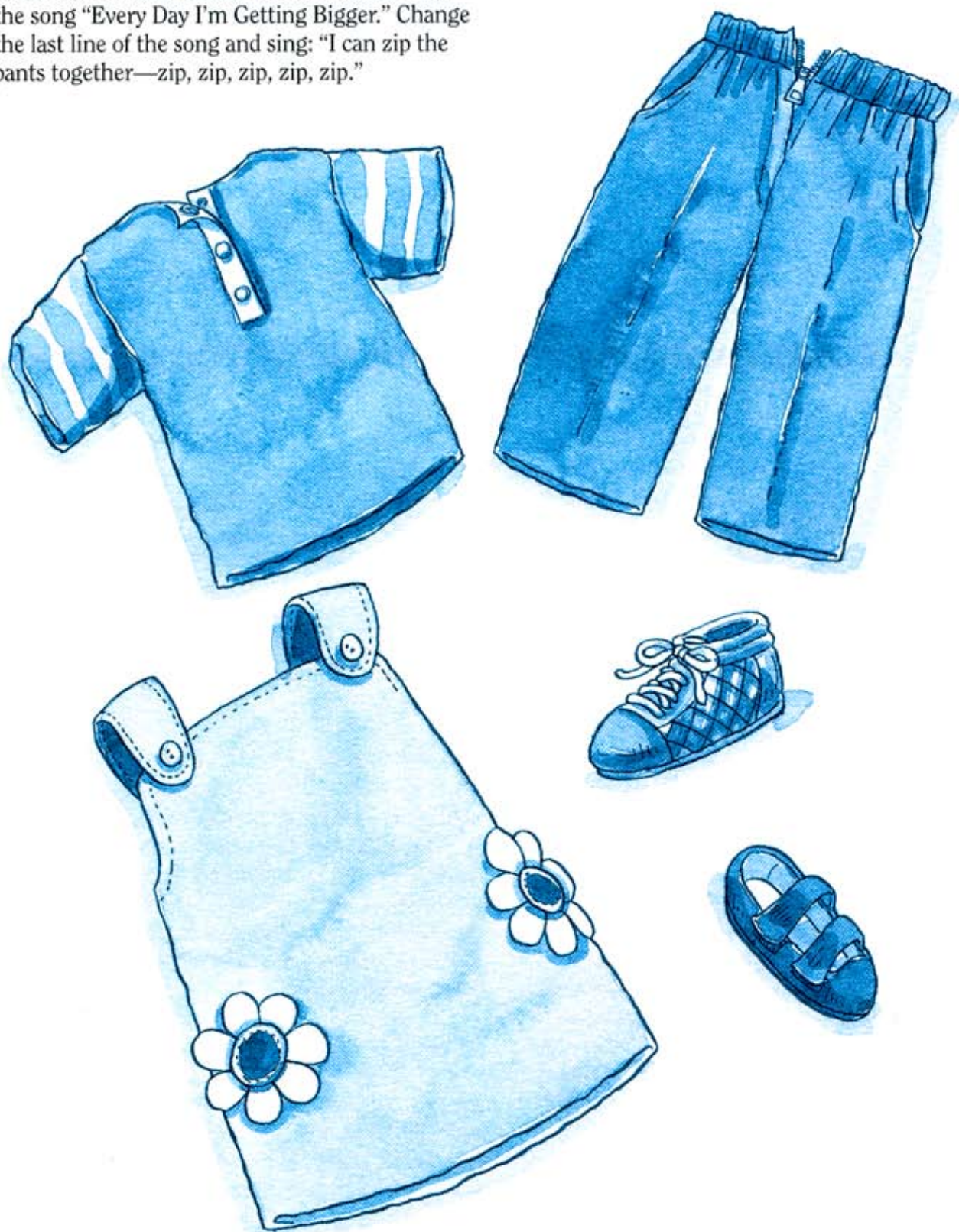
Hearing a Bible Story

Place the puzzle "Jesus and the Children" in the puzzle rack. Watch as a child works the puzzle. When she finishes, talk with her about the picture of Jesus and the children. Compare the picture on the puzzle with the picture of Jesus and the children that is displayed in the center. Open the Read-to-Me Bible and briefly tell the story "Jesus and the Children."

Learning to Zip, Hook, and Snap

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Place the following items in a clothes basket: shirt with snaps, jacket or pants with zipper, blouse or dress with buttons, shoe that laces, and shoe with Velcro.

Invite the preschoolers to work on zipping, snapping, hooking, lacing, and buttoning. Sing the song "Every Day I'm Getting Bigger." Change the last line of the song and sing: "I can zip the pants together—zip, zip, zip, zip, zip."



Sharing Group Experiences

Group Time Activities




Because they are three years old, the children you teach are more naturally active than quiet. For this reason, group experiences need to allow the children to move and become actively involved. Some three-year-olds are not developmentally ready for a group experience. Make arrangements for these children to participate in an activity like looking at books, working puzzles, playing games, or taking a walk outside with a teacher.

Hearing About Being Special

Play a selection from the cassette *Getting to Know Myself* to signal the children to meet for group time. Sing and move according to the directions of the song.

Introduce the group experience.—Sing the first stanza of the song “There’s No One Exactly Like Me.” Substitute the children’s names for the word *me*. Sing the song several times to allow you to include each child’s name.

Say the action rhyme “I Am Special” (see Appendix). Repeat the rhyme a couple of times to help the children become familiar with the words.

Read a big book.— **Prepare Ahead:** Make a big book that relates to the unit theme “I Am Special.” Cut large, white paper into 16-by-24-inch sheets. Staple the pages together to form a book. Make up a story about the special children in your preschool class. Use large manuscript print to print the words on the pages. Illustrate with felt-tip markers. Or purchase a big book related to being special such as *A Special Kind of Me* or *We Are All Alike . . . We Are All Different*.

Read the big book you made or read pages 1-3 of the book *A Special Kind of Me*. This book of poems celebrates the qualities that make people special. The poems provide opportunities for introducing concepts of number, alphabet, rhyming, and picture reading. The book can be used throughout the year.

Stand and sing the following song to the familiar tune “Did You Ever See a Lassie?” Sway while singing.

Did You Ever See the Children?

Did you ever see the children,
The children, the children?
Did you ever see the children
At preschool today?
Did you ever see Teresa and Andy and Jessica,
Did you ever see Tomoko and Kevin and Cody,
(Continue naming each child in the group)
At our school today?

Show the teaching picture “Playing with Friends.” Talk with the children about how the two girls are alike and how they are different. Say, “God made each of us special.”

Say an action rhyme.—Read the rhyme “Head and Shoulders” from the book *A Special Kind of Me*. After reading the rhyme, invite the children to stand and touch their heads and shoulders as they say the rhyme. Or use the action rhyme “Tap, Clap, Sit” (see Appendix).

Conclude the group experience.—Close the group time by playing the game “Guess Who.” Describe a child and ask the children to guess the name of the friend you are describing. For example, say: “My friend is a special girl. She has brown hair. She has green eyes. She has on a pink dress. Guess who she is.” Give children who are interested an opportunity to be the leader and describe a friend.

Thanking God for Making Us Special

Play a selection from the cassette *Getting to Know Myself* as a signal for the children to gather for group time.


Sing the song “There’s No One Exactly Like Me.” Sing the song several times substituting the names of the children in your group for the word *me*.

Say the action rhymes “I Am Special” and “Tap, Clap, Sit” (see Appendix).

Tell the Bible story.—Open the Read-to-Me Bible to Matthew 19 and hold it on your lap as you tell the story “Jesus and the Children.” Look down at the Bible from time to time to help the children know that the words of the story are in the Bible. Maintain eye contact with the children as you tell the story in your own words.

Say a prayer thanking God for making each of us special. Call each child by name as you thank God for making him.

Sing a rebus song.—Use the rebus chart for the song “I Know He Cares for Me” prepared for the music center. Point to the words and pictures as you sing. If a child would like to help point to the chart, guide her hand as the group sings along.

Read the Bible thoughts.— **Prepare Ahead:** Cut pictures of children from catalogs and mount them on construction paper. In the Read-to-Me Bible mark each of the Bible thoughts suggested for this unit with a picture of a child.

Roll a large ball to a child and ask him to bring it back to you. When he brings you the ball, hand him the Bible and help him open it to one of the marked verses. Point to the Bible reference as you say the Bible thought aloud. Make a comment to help the children relate the verse to their experiences. For example, say: “God is good to us. God gave use eyes to see and ears to hear.”

Say an action rhyme.—Say the action rhyme “Head and Shoulders” from the book *A Special Kind of Me*. Or use the familiar action song “Where Is Thumbkin?”

Conclude the group experience.—Look at the teaching picture “Jesus and the Children.” Ask the children to recall the portion of the story that is shown in the picture.

Learning About Growing and Changing

Play a selection from the cassette *Getting to Know Myself*. Or sing the familiar song “Where Is Thumbkin?” Continue until all children are gathered for group time.

Sing familiar songs.—Sing the songs “There’s No One Exactly Like Me” and “Every Day I’m Getting Bigger.” Give the children an opportunity to use rhythm instruments as they sing.

Say the action rhyme “Five Little Friends” (see Appendix). This can be used as a finger play or five children can play out the rhyme.

Tell the following story about growing:

The Red Shoes

“Ouch, ouch, ouch!” cried Michael.

“What hurts, Michael?” asked Mama.

“My toe hurts,” said Michael.

“Let’s take off your shoe and have a look,” said Mama.



Off came one of Michael's shoes and socks. Off came Michael's other shoe and sock.

"My goodness, Michael," said Mama. "Your toes are all scrunched up. I think your shoes are too small. How you are growing! We'll need to go shopping for shoes tomorrow."

"I want red shoes," said Michael.

"Maybe," said Mama. "We'll see."

The next morning Michael and Mama went shopping for shoes.

"We're shopping for new shoes for Michael," Mama told the shoe store clerk. "Michael's growing bigger."

"I want red shoes," said Michael.

"I'm sorry," said the shoe store clerk. "I have blue shoes but no red shoes."

Hurry, scurry. Hurry, scurry. Michael and Mama went to another store.

"We're looking for new shoes for this big boy," said Mama.

"Red shoes," said Michael.

"I'm sorry," said the shoe store clerk. "We have yellow shoes but no red shoes."

"Let's go home. We'll shop again tomorrow," said Mama. "We might have to buy blue or yellow shoes, Michael."

"I like red," said Michael.

When Michael and Mama got home, they saw a package on the front porch.

"Look," said Mama. "The mail came while we were gone. It's a package from Grandma. It's for you, Michael. I wonder what it is?"

Snip! Snip! Snip! Mama cut the string.

Rip and tear! Michael pulled off the paper and opened the box. A big smile came on Michael's face.

"Oh," said Mama. "Look what Grandma found!"

"Red shoes!" shouted Michael.

Michael put on the new red shoes and wiggled his toes.

"They're just right," said Mama. "Red shoes that are just right for a growing boy!"

Talk about experiences.—Listen as the children tell about their experiences with outgrowing shoes and clothing. Close the conversation with a reminder that we are always growing and changing.

Sing a song.—Sing the first stanza of the song “Every Day I’m Getting Bigger.”

Conclude the group experience.—Sing the following song to the familiar tune “Mulberry Bush”:

Putting on Shoes

This is the way I put on my shoes,
Put on my shoes, put on my shoes.
This is the way I put on my shoes,
Early in the morning.

Sing about other things children do that are indications they are growing more responsible for caring for themselves. For example, sing: “wash my face,” “brush my teeth,” “put on my clothes.”

Talking About Our Names

Play a selection from the cassette *Getting to Know Myself* or sing the song “There’s No One Exactly Like Me” while the children gather for group time.


Sing the song “Where Is Thumbkin?” Sing the song a second time and substitute the names of the children for *Thumbkin*. Continue singing until you have sung each child’s name.

Play a clapping game.—Clap your hands as you say the following chant:

We All Have a Name

Names! Names!
We all have a name!
Let’s clap our hands and shout our names!

After chanting the rhyme, say each child’s name as you clap the syllables. For example, *Mary* has two claps.

Play a finding game.— **Prepare Ahead:** Make a name card for each child. Print the child’s name and attach a sticker to the card.

Keep a set of matching stickers to give to the children during the activity. Just before group time, hide the name cards around the room. Be sure each card is in a hiding place that is visible to the children.

Explain to the children that they are going to play a finding game. Tell them that name cards are hidden around the room and that each name card has a sticker. Give each child a sticker to match the one on his name card. When each child has a sticker, suggest that the children start looking for their name cards. Each child brings his name card to a teacher as it is found. At the end of the school day, give the children the name cards to take home.

Sing and march.—Sing the song “Tell Us Your Name” as you march around the room with the children. Change the words and sing “walk along,” “jump along,” “clap along.”


Conclude the group experience.—Use a drum to beat out the rhythm patterns as you chant the children’s names. Ask each child to stand and wave to the group when she hears her name.

Learning That Some People Have Special Needs

Play a selection from the cassette *Getting to Know Myself* or sing the song “Tell Us Your Name” while the children gather for group time.

Say an action rhyme.—Select one of the rhymes from the Appendix. For example, use “I Am Special” or “Five Little Friends.”

Play out a nursery rhyme.—Bring a candle and candle holder with you to group time. Say the nursery rhyme “Jack Be Nimble.” Place the candle in the holder and set it on the floor. Say the rhyme a second time and jump over the candlestick. Invite the children to take turns jumping over the candlestick. Substitute a child’s name for *Jack*. For example, say: “Sarah be nimble. Sarah be quick. Sarah jump over the candlestick.”

Talk about children with special needs.— **Prepare Ahead:** Gather pictures of children with braces on their legs. Obtain a set of leg braces.

Explain that it would be difficult for some children to jump over the candlestick. Show pictures of children wearing leg braces or show a set of leg braces. Perhaps you have children in your class who need braces to walk. Talk about other special needs people have. For example, some people need eyeglasses, hearing aids, or a wheelchair. Pray thanking God for making each of us special.

Invite a visitor.—Invite a health care professional to visit. If you have a child with a special need, invite her doctor or nurse. Or invite someone who treats vision or hearing impairments. Explain to the visitor that you want her to talk with the children briefly about the work she does for people with special needs. Ask the visitor to bring items such as eyeglasses or hearing aids to show to the children. Tell the visitor your goal is to help the children develop an awareness that some people have special needs.

Conclude the group experience.—Sing the song “I Know He Cares for Me.” Use the rebus chart that was prepared for the music center.

Outdoor Time Activities



Offer encouraging comments to help a child feel good about his progress with climbing, running, hopping, and other skills that require him to use his large muscles. For example, say: “Anthony, you climbed to the top of the slide and came all the way down. I remember when you were just learning to climb. How you are growing!”

Outdoor play is a time when disputes may occur among young children. Because they have not yet gained complete control over their bodies, they have a tendency to run into people or things when they try to move fast. If a child accidentally runs into a friend, help her stop and talk about it. For example, say: “Jennifer, you were running fast. You were running so fast you didn’t even see Andrew. When you ran into Andrew, it hurt him. Andrew, I’m so sorry you are hurt.” As you establish this model for Jennifer, she will develop an awareness that sometimes accidents happen and that talking to the person who was hurt helps everyone feel better.

Practicing Balancing Skills

Provide opportunities for practicing balancing skills. This can be done on a commercial or homemade balance beam. However, look for opportunities to balance without using a balance beam. Lines in the sidewalk; a narrow path; a low, wooden border outlining a sand area or flower bed are spaces three can use to practice balancing.

Walking in Various Ways

Walk outside in various ways. Instead of just walking, challenge the children to walk on tiptoes. This will help the children slow down and give them an opportunity to practice balancing on their toes.

Moving with Streamers

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Make waistbands by cutting 1-inch-wide elastic and sewing into circles large enough to fit around a child's waist. Provide an assortment of crepe paper streamers, ribbon pieces, scarves, and cloth strips.

Help a child put the elastic around her waist and slide some of the streamers under the band. As she runs, turns, and jumps, the streamers will twirl. Use this activity outside and as a fun, indoor activity for a rainy day. Play a musical selection as the children move around the room.

Snack Time Activities



Make a small place card to identify each child's snack space. Print a child's name in neat manuscript print on her card. Attach a sticker or the child's picture to help her find her name card.

Eating Ethnic Snacks

Serve snack foods that are enjoyed by the various ethnic groups represented in your classroom. Ask families to send recipes from home. Often parents or other relatives are happy to provide a sample of their favorite snack foods.

Washing Hands

Help children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating. Allow two or three children at a time to wash their hands before eating. Be sure the children scrub their hands with soap and rinse them well. As the children wash, talk with them about the importance of getting the dirt off their hands before they eat. Explain that eating with dirty hands can make people sick.

Thanking God for Food

Help the children learn to thank God before eating. This may be a new experience for children of families who do not have a blessing before meals. Vary the way you pray. At times plan for a teacher to pray aloud. Thank God for the specific food you will be eating. At other times invite a child at each table to express thanks for his group.

Making Initial Pretzels

Ask a few children who enjoy cooking to help make snack for their friends. For example, make initial pretzels using your favorite pretzel recipe or the recipe in the Appendix. Shape each pretzel into an alphabet letter that is the initial of each child's first name. Talk about the letters during snack time. Involve the children in finding names that begin with the same letter.

Rest Time Activities



Help the children become responsible by teaching them to take care of their towels or mats at rest time. Encourage each child to find his mat and spread it on the floor in his resting space. When rest time is over, give the children time to fold mats themselves and return them to the storage

area. It may be helpful to ask the children to rest in the same spot every day. This provides security for the child and helps separate children who might be tempted to play with a friend instead of resting. Time is also saved because children take their mats to a designated spot instead of wandering around the room looking for a space. Allow a child to have her special blanket or toy at rest time. Resting is a time when children slow down and are most likely to become homesick. A security blanket or toy may provide just the right amount of reassurance to keep a young child happy.

Reading a Book

Allow the children to look at one book at the beginning of rest time. This activity helps children settle down and gives them an opportunity to look at a favorite book. When a child finishes his book, ask him to lay it on the floor beside his resting mat.

Listening to Music

Play quiet music and dim the lights to help children have a more tranquil rest time. However, do not feel that you must play music every day. Sometimes simply having a silent time is worthwhile. The boys and girls might also enjoy hearing a teacher sing or hum softly.

.....Unit Evaluation.....

- Did the children have numerous opportunities for developing an awareness that God made each of them a special, one-of-a-kind person?
- Can the children tell about ways they are growing and changing?
- Are the children learning the names of friends and teachers?
- Do the children realize that some friends have special needs?
- Which activities did the children enjoy most?
- When you teach this unit again, what will you change?

Resources

Block Accessories

First Dollhouse (Constructive Playthings)
Wedgie Family Figures (Guidecraft)

Books

Read-to-Me Bible (Holman)*
All About You, Anholt (Puffin)
All by Myself, Mayer (Western)
Big Like Me, Hines (Greenwillow)
Bright Eyes, Brown Skin, Hudson and Ford (Just Us)
Can You Guess? Miller (Greenwillow)
Dancing Feet, Agell (Gulliver)
Early Words, Scarry (Random House)
Friends in the Park, Bunnett (Checkerboard)
Happy Birthday, Sam, Hutchins (Mulberry)
Happy Birthday to Me, Rockwell and Rockwell (Simon and Schuster)
I Just Forgot, Mayer (Western)
The Important Book, Brown (Trophy)
Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? Carlstrom (Simon and Schuster)
Just a Mess, Mayer (Western)
Just a Rainy Day, Mayer (Western)
Just Camping Out, Mayer (Western)
Just Me and My Dad, Mayer (Western)
Just Me and My Little Brother, Mayer (Western)
Just Me and My Little Sister, Mayer (Western)
Just Me and My Puppy, Mayer (Western)
Koala Lou, Fox (Harcourt Brace)
Little Blue and Little Yellow, Lionni (Mulberry)
Make a Face, Schwartz and Schwartz (Scholastic)
My Best Shoes, Burton (Tambourine)
The New Baby, Mayer (Western)
Now I Am Three! Moncure (Children's Press)
Shoes from Grandpa, Fox (Orchard)
Skeletons! Skeletons! All About Bones, Hall (Putnam)
A Special Kind of Me, Rankin and Stenson (Wright Group) [available in big-book format]
The Very Little Boy, Krasilovsky (Scholastic)
The Very Little Girl, Krasilovsky (Scholastic)
We Are All Alike . . . We Are All Different, Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergartners (Scholastic) [available in big-book format]
When I Grow Up, Mayer (Western)
While I Am Little, Goennel (Tambourine)
Why Do You Love Me? Baynton (Greenwillow)
"My Books About . . ." series (Convention)*

Resource Books

Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose (Putnam)
"Jack Be Nimble"

Magazines

Growing (Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention)*
Look and Listen (Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention)*
ParentLife (Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention)*

Music

Cassettes

Getting to Know Myself, Palmer (Educational Activities)
Modern Tunes for Rhythms and Instruments, Palmer (Educational Activities)

Songbooks

Go In and Out the Window, Fox (H. Holt)
"Did You Ever See a Lassie?"
Music for Today's Children, Butler, Kirkland, Leach, and Adams (Genevox)**
"Every Day I'm Getting Bigger"
"I Know He Cares for Me"
"I Like to Paint"
"Tell Us Your Name"
"There's No One Exactly Like Me"
"Where Is Thumbkin?"

Pictures

WEE Learn Teaching Pictures for Three-Year-Olds (Convention)*
"God Made Me Special," Picture 6
"Jesus and the Children," Picture 5
"Playing with Friends," Picture 4

Puzzles and Manipulatives

"Boy" (Judy/Instructo) J06041 [6 pieces]
"Girl" (Judy/Instructo) J06040 [6 pieces]
"I'm Glad to Be Me" (Shining Star) J068046 [4 pieces]
"Jesus and the Children" (Shining Star) J068037 [9 pieces]
"Multicultural Kids" (The Puzzle People) [8 puzzles available individually]
"Special Needs Kids" (The Puzzle People) [6 puzzles available individually]

Resources (cont'd)

"This Is My Body" [Ravensburger See-Inside Puzzle]
(Southern School Supply) INP-RBO6643
Jumbo Wooden Beads (Lakeshore Learning Materials)

Miscellaneous

Adaptive Equipment for Dolls with Disabilities (Lakeshore Learning Materials)
Model of a human skeleton (school supply store or science department of a high school or community college)
Multi-Ethnic School Dolls (Lakeshore Learning Materials)

*These resources are available by calling 1-800-458-2772.

**This resource is out of print. If you cannot locate the song suggested, substitute a song appropriate to the activity or make up words to a familiar tune.

UNIT 3

I Am Special

Parent Communications

Dear Parents,

You have an active child! I'm sure that is not news to you!

A child's general health and fitness are improved through movement. Through movement exploration activities, children gain the following benefits:

- better control over their muscles
- a clearer understanding of how their bodies work
- an opportunity to communicate feelings and creative ideas
- the ability to respond to challenges they set for themselves

You can give your child opportunities to develop his big muscles by doing some of the following activities at home:

- pretending to reach for the moon or catch a star
- walking on a board or the cracks in the sidewalk
- doing the bunny hop
- rolling, bouncing, kicking, pitching, and catching a large ball
- marching around the house
- walking, crawling (through open-ended boxes), jumping, and hopping (with both feet and on one foot)

Remember, moving is important!

Sincerely,

Your Child's Teacher

Home Activity

Your child is special. You are, too. Plan a fun time with your child. First mix up a basic sugar cookie recipe. While the dough is chilling, go to the park or play with your child in your backyard. Do some of the movement activities suggested in the letter.

After the cookie dough has chilled for about an hour, guide your child in rolling out a piece of the dough. Then as your child places her hand on the dough, use a table knife to cut around her hand. Make a cookie print of your hand, also. Place the cookie hands on a baking sheet and bake.

As you work, talk about how much your child has grown and how special she is you. Your child likes to hear about what she was like as a baby. Knowing you realize how much she is growing gives her happy feelings.

Enjoy your hand cookies with a glass of milk. Make extra cookies and share them with other family members or a neighbor.

