



## Pre-K Aquatic

Mt. Washington Children's Center  
Keeping freshwater fish



# Objective



We choose a freshwater fish tank to introduce our children to popular types of pets. Many of our children have allergies, and fish were a perfect option for us.

- Help teach children how to be responsible and care for other living things
- How to feed and maintain our freshwater fish and fish tank
- Develop vocabulary and skills for creating realistic habitats for our pet fish
- Discuss what life is like “under the sea”



# Evaluation



- Throughout each of our lessons, we worked on different forms of evaluation for our Pre-K classroom.
- Many of our evaluation methods involved artwork and sharing at circle time
- We also evaluated parent participation by asking for volunteers to help with tank setup and donations by adding blurbs to our monthly newsletters.

# + Introducing Our Fish

- We set up our fish tanks over a weekend to surprise the children.
- Before revealing the aquariums, we asked the children if any of them have pets at home and what types of pets. This became our journal entry for the day, drawings of each child's pets or a pet they would like.
- We then gathered for circle time, revealing the tanks and asking the children what type of pet might live in the tank?





# + Introducing Our Fish



- These are some of the “Pets We Have at Home”
- Many of our children have cats and/or dogs. Fish were a new and exciting pet to learn about.





# Rules of the Road

- Over the next few days, as we added fish to the tanks, we talked about the process of how fish were added.
- The main fish we added is a blue betta named Thackeray.
- Each day, children would draw names from popsicle sticks to see who would help feed the fish that day.
- We discussed how much each fish needed to eat.





# Rules of the Road

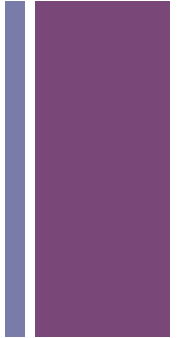


- We made feeding time a math activity, having the children always count out three pellets, dropping them in the tank one by one.
- During circle time we would talk about what our fish eat and how it's not like human food. We played a guessing game using flashcards with images of different food items. The children guessed which food type a fish might eat.
- As part of a circle time activity one week after Thackeray joined the tank, we set up a giant poster board. The teachers asked the children to help remember the rules we had gone over during the past week, and the teachers made the poster, adding different images to remind the children. The poster was displayed in the classroom. Rules like “only three pellets” and “don’t bang on the glass” were added by the children.





# Under Water Interactive



- Often times the children wanted to pet the fish as they would their dog or cat. We talked about why we can't pet the fish because they live and breathe under water. One of the children even asked if fish could sneeze. We did some extra research to answer his question, which spawned a science experiment.
- Fish cannot sneeze because they don't have lungs, but they can burp and yawn!
- We created a science experiment helping to teach the children how gills help the fish to breathe like our lungs help us.
- We used a cup, coffee filter, rubber band and water with colored sand to teach the children how gills filter oxygen.
- The sand represented the oxygen that would get caught in the "gills" (coffee filter") as the water mixture was poured over the filter.







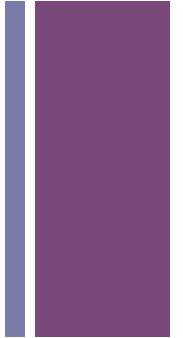
# Under Water Interactive



- To help the children understand what a sea creature might feel like without putting our pets in danger, we created an aquatic water play table.
- We filled the table with water, adding several grow-a-fish that expanded in the water. The children were able to watch them grow bigger, just as our fish did, and they were able to play and feel the slimy “creatures” that filled the tank. We also added sand and fabric aquarium plants to allow the children to explore.



# Life Aquatic



- To build on our interactivity, we created a life-size betta habitat.
- We made a “betta cave” for the children to hide and play just like our Thackeray.
- Giant streamers were hung to represent the plants and seaweed in the tank. A giant cardboard box was painted to match our coral caves and we even made a children’s betta hammock to act like the leaves our betta likes to float and rest on!





# Life Aquatic

- To help the children remember what we were learning, one of our teachers wrote a song for our betta fish:

- “Way Down Deep”

Sung to “The Wheels on the Bus”

Fish use fins to get around, get around, get around

Fish use fins to get around, way deep down

They breathe with gills under the sea, under the sea, under the sea

They breathe with gills under the sea, way deep down

Bubbles from their mouths go blub, blub, blub, blub, blub, blub

Bubbles from their mouths go blub, blub, blub, way deep down

Find them hiding in a cave, in a cave, in a cave

Find them hiding in a cave, way deep down

All the kids in the class are excited to see, excited to see, excited to see

All the kids in the class are excited to see our friend Thackeray!







# Conclusion



- Our children continue to learn new things about our fish every day.
- We have begun to add new types of plants and work on creating “portable” fish tanks with our children that they can take home. They are able to design their own tank on a paper plate and add new fish and plants over the course of a week.
- We are continuing to get our parents involved by asking them to share photos of their pets and interesting facts they learn with their children.
- We have an upcoming field trip planned to visit our local aquarium to see how other fish live.