

Pets in the Classroom



Hamster friends

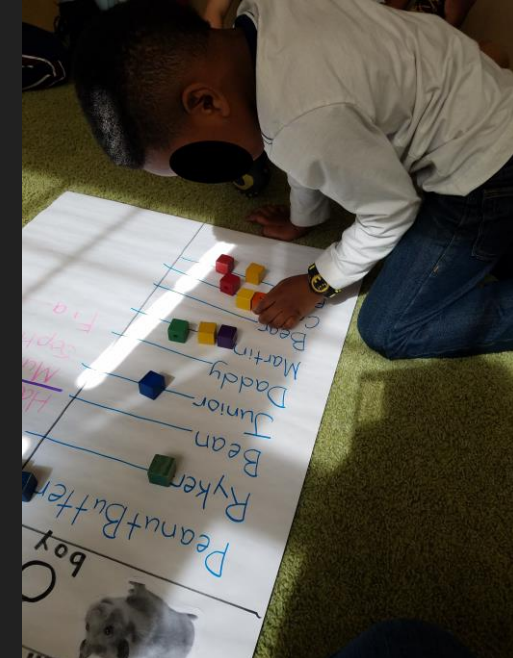
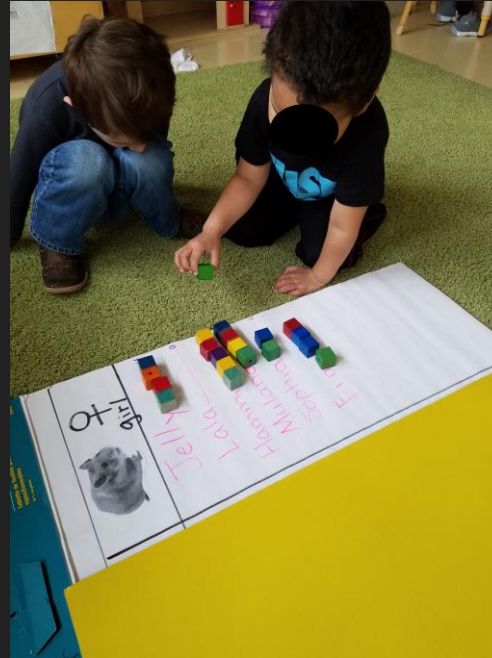
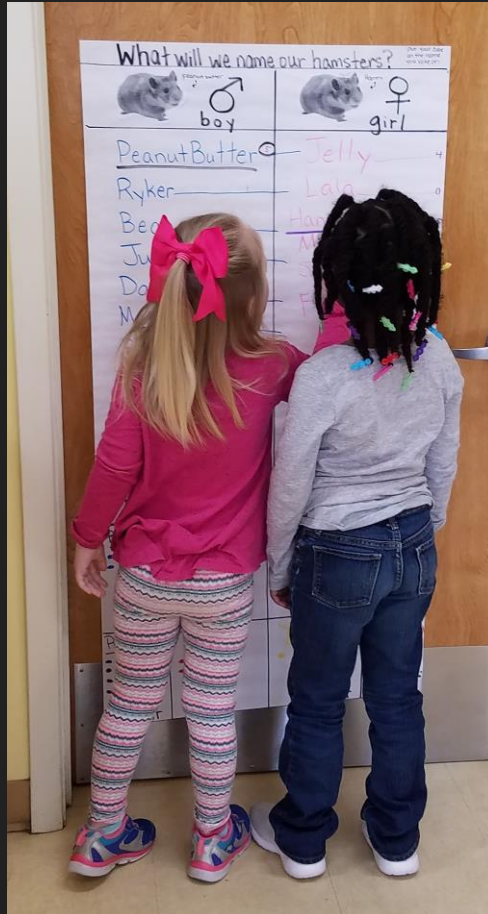
Monday, Day 1

now	What we want to know	Learned
<p>he can play "pooper"</p> <p>2 eyes</p> <p>4 little feet</p> <p>tail</p> <p>round ears</p> <p>fur</p> <p>medium-sized</p> <p>eat hamster food</p> <p>can crawl</p> <p>Do not like a lot of noise - they like it "QUIET"</p> <p>feet like a Big Bad Wolf</p> <p>claws</p> <p>Nice</p> <p>walks in a bubble</p>	<p>Lay eggs?</p> <p>Birth little babies?</p> <p>Do they make sounds?</p> <p>Do they bite?</p> <p>Do they play?</p> <p>Why are they in different cages?</p>	<p>Birth live babies</p> <p>Hamsters do not live in groups. They live by themselves.</p> <p>Squeak</p> <p>Some are loud</p> <p>Some are not loud</p> <p>They live in the wild and they live in houses in cage.</p> <p>They like to climb, snuggle, dig, go in tunnels.</p> <p>They need a QUIET place. They do not like loud sounds.</p> <p>Nocturnal - Sleeps in day, Awake at night.</p> <p>Hamsters bite when scared.</p> <p>Hamsters learn their names and come when called.</p> <p>Live 2-3 years</p>

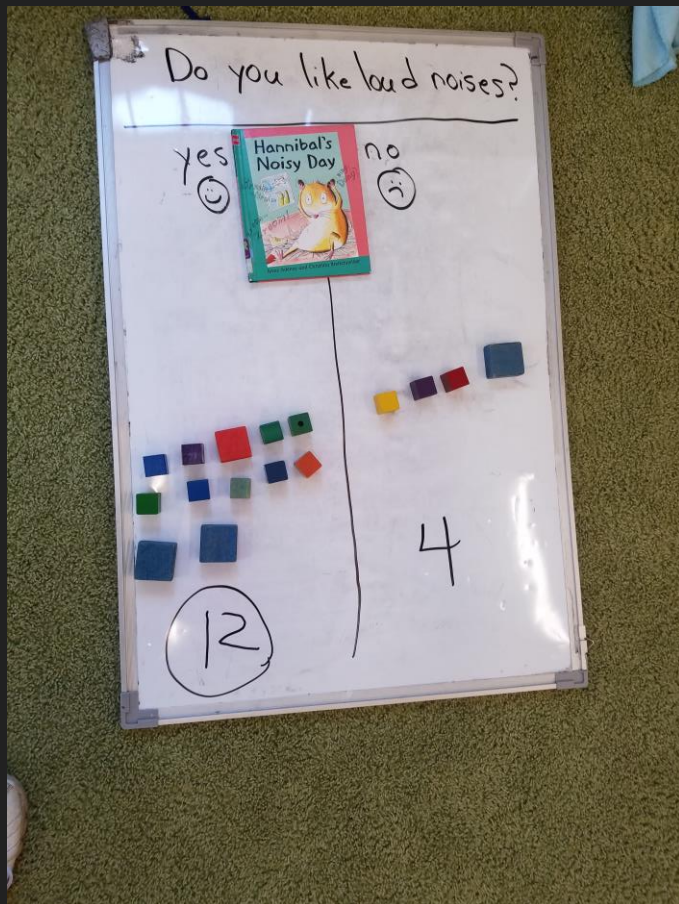
- Introduction of hamster theme.
- Discussion of who has had experiences with hamsters. (Including the needs of hamsters)
- **Chart:** "Hamsters" KWL chart (What we know about hamsters, What we want to know about hamsters, What we learned about hamsters). Add to what we learn about hamsters portion is on-going.
- Put hamster visible to children and see what we can add to the W and L portion of the chart. (examples: how many toes does it have? does it have teeth?)
- Read books about hamsters and list more under L for learned through discussion.
- Establish rules for safety for hamsters (and us) and post. Encourage children to give gentle reminders to one another about the rules.

Tuesday, Day 2

- Chart: discussion of possible names for our 2 hamsters. Write down options agreed upon. Children are given cubes they use to put beside the name they vote on. Count up the votes together by counting the row of blocks per name. Write the number (as sing a song on how to write it, example: "down and around with a hat on top makes number 5"). Determine which has the most votes. Have the hamster's name labeled on it's dwelling.



Wednesday, Day 3

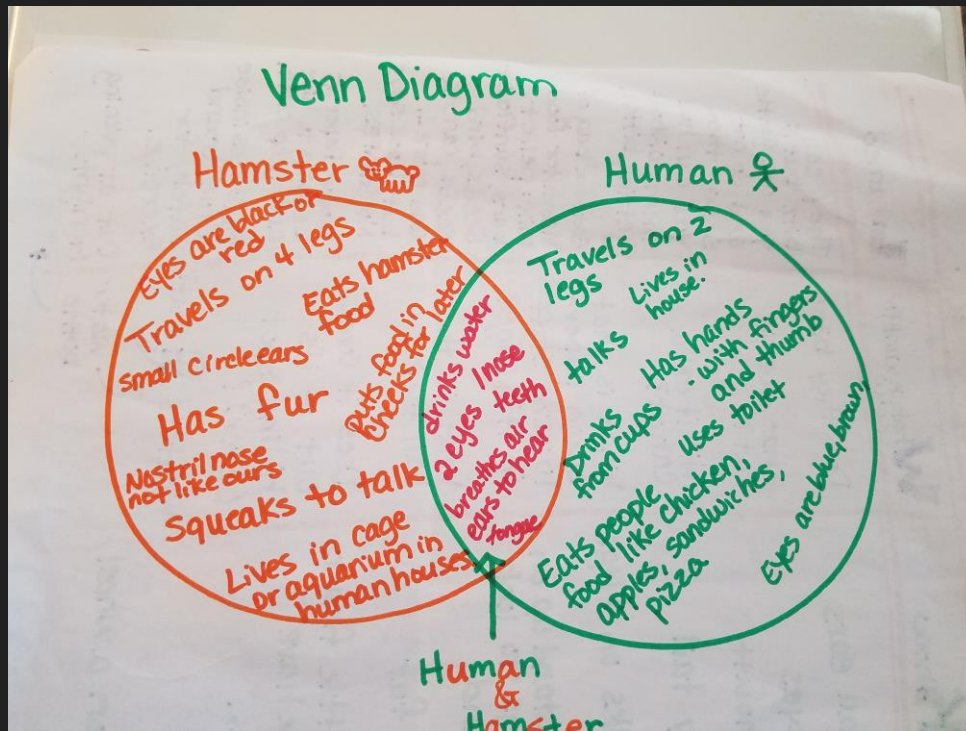


- Facilitate children development of classroom rules for the classroom pets. Write down their responses to post in the science center where the pets are housed.
- Read both fiction and nonfiction books about hamsters to determine their needs, wants, and how to keep them safe (as well as us).
- Chart whether we like loud noises or not after the read aloud of a hamster disturbed by noises as he tried to sleep.



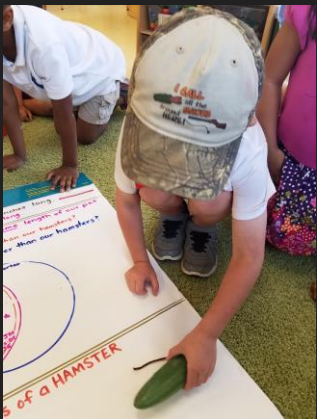
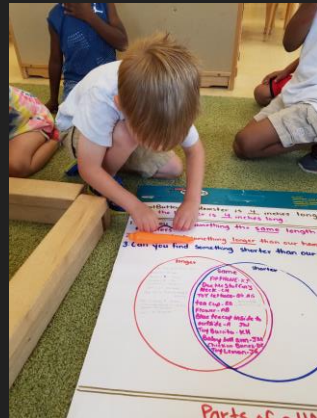
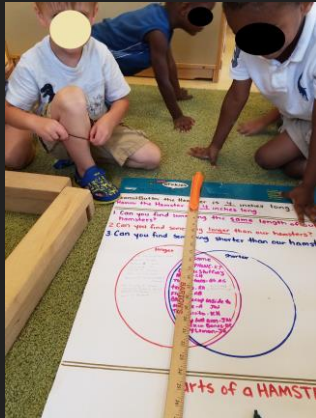
Thursday, Day 4

- **Chart:** Venn diagram to compare and contrast us (human) to a hamster.
- Practice self-control by constructing a wall with unit blocks and placing the hamster ball inside to run around while creating Venn diagram.



Friday, Day 5

- **Chart:** Measure hamster with yarn. Hold yarn to ruler to see how long it was (number identification, measurement). Find objects in the classroom that are the same size as the yarn/hamster and write on chart.



Peanut Butter the Hamster is 4 inches long. ~~4~~
 Mami the Hamster is 4 inches long.

1. Can you find something the same length of our pet hamsters?
2. Can you find something longer than our hamsters?
3. Can you find something shorter than our hamsters?

longer

- Spoon-Carolee
- 18" Doc McStuffins-Carla
- 3 Unicorn-Aarlyn
- Scissors 6"-Jan
- Scissors 6"-Jan
- Carrot 7"-Carolee
- can - 6"-Belinda
- Sax and ...-Katie

Shorter

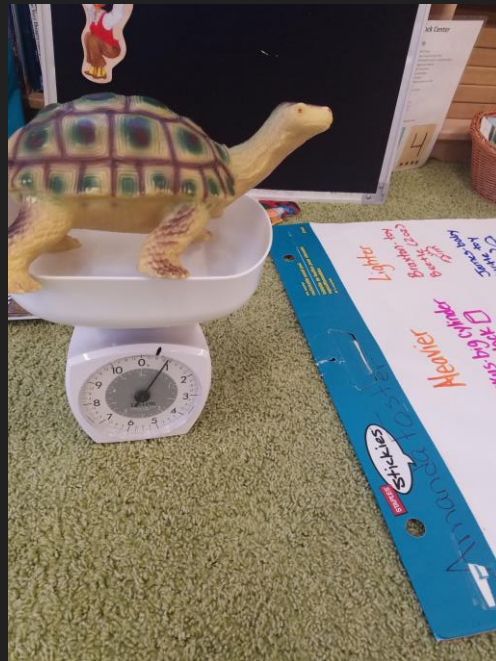
- measure cup-Ellyott
- yellow cup-Jade
- Compass-Belinda
- conference-Ann-Jane
- Baby monkey Toy-Saman
- Wreath-Caroline
- String-James
- Toy chicken with the Dinosaur
- Beanwater hole-Kyle
- Wheel-Peggy-Burton
- Blue teacup-Aarlyn
- Gold 65-Lily (65) Jan
- Phone number-Alex
- Mississippi-Michael
- Red toy-Burton

Same

- pink rubber-Ellyott
- FIPPHONE-KJ**
- Doc McStuffins**
- Neck-CH**
- Toy lettuce-B&AG**
- tea cup-RO**
- Flower-AB**
- Blue teacup inside to outside-A JW**
- Toy Burrito-KH**
- Baby doll Ann-Jan**
- Chicken Bones-DC**
- Toy Lemon-J&J**

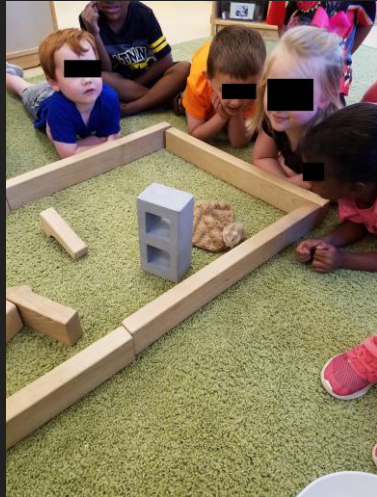
Monday, Day 6

- **Chart:** Model for children that a scale shows the weight of an object. First weigh ourselves, then get out the kitchen scale and explain it is for lighter/smaller objects (model examples). Guess how much the hamster will weigh. Weigh the hamster. Who guessed the closest?
- Use the kitchen scale to weigh various objects around the room and chart whether it weighs the same or is lighter or heavier than the hamster.



- Extended activity: introduce the balance. Use the balance to see what objects weigh more or less than the hamster and chart ("Which weighs more?").

Tuesday, Day 7



- **Chart:** 1. Model drawing a map of the classroom on dry erase board with the children's feedback/discussion of where things are and what to draw on the map. (how many windows? How many doors? Sink? Etc.)
- 2. The children will have a small group activity to draw a map of the hamster cage and contents. (Can have images pre-drawn and cut out to paste to paper or have children draw on paper-looking at process of the mapmaking over final product being "perfect.") Determine where they go by looking at cage.
- 3. Whole group activity later, children will draw out a plan for a hamster playground (use unit blocks, materials they made, etc.) and then we will use the design to set it up.

Wednesday, Day 8

- Chart:** STEM project to create materials for the hamster. Make list of things we have seen or played with on playgrounds at home or in a park. (stumped? stimulate with photographs/visual aids). What might the hamsters like to have that we want to try to build? What materials do we need? (dictate responses, facilitate discussion). Remind how we drew maps yesterday. "Designs." Design how to create what you brainstormed during small group time. Create it. Test it. When presenting it at whole group carpet time, children tell what improvements and adjustments were made.

Homemade for HAMSTERS

Over 20 Fun Projects Anyone Can Make, Including Tunnels, Towers, Dens, Swings, Ladders and More



Carin Oliver



add a tiny bit of non-toxic paint to the water as you apply the last layer of soft paper to the balloon.

TOOLS & MATERIALS

- Round balloon
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Water
- Tumbler
- Large paintbrush

OPTIONAL:

- Non-toxic paint or dye

THE SEESAW TUBE

Your hamster thinks it's just a tunnel... and then it tumbles out to top a hamster! This is a nice little surprise that will have your hamster playing with this project tube's end again.

TOOLS & MATERIALS



- Toilet paper tube
- Scissors
- Corrugated cardboard
- Pencil
- Glue
- Bamboo skewer

OPTIONAL:

- Non-toxic markers or paint

CONGRATULATIONS!

This is a great project to add to an outdoor play area (see page 35-36).

1 Measure your toilet paper tube and then draw a rectangle on the corrugated cardboard that is the same length and twice as wide as this.

2 Using scissors, cut out this rectangle, then trace and cut two more.

3 On two of the rectangles, make a mark at the center of one of the long sides. Using a ruler, draw a line from this mark to each of the opposite corners to make a triangle. Cut out these large triangles.

4 Stand each triangle up on its longest side and glue onto the long sides of the rectangle.

5 Use a bamboo skewer to poke a hole near the top of each triangle. Then remove the skewer.

6 Use the skewer again to poke two holes, one by one, near the center of the toilet paper tube. Remove the skewer.

7 Hold the toilet paper tube between the two triangle supports so that all four holes line up. Thread a skewer through the holes in one triangle, then the holes in the tube and then out through the other triangle. Use scissors to trim the ends of the skewer.

36 Climbing Projects

The Seesaw Tube 39

THE TREEHOUSE

Imagine how excited your hamster will be when he/she gets her very own treehouse! There are ladders to climb, different levels to explore, a house to hide in, and even a swing to play on.

TOOLS & MATERIALS


- Corrugated cardboard
- Scissors
- Rollers
- Utility knife
- Cutting mat
- Non-toxic glue
- Bamboo skewer
- Drinking straw
- String

OPTIONAL:

- Non-toxic markers or paint and paper

KEEP BUILDING!

You can add more to this treehouse in with us some friends, well go on the platform or even turn the treehouse into a climbing wall! (see THE CLIMBING WALL, pages 40-43).



1 On the corrugated cardboard, draw two wide trees of the same height. Make sure that the bases of the trees are wide. Cut these out with scissors.

2 Using a utility knife or scissors, cut a slit in one tree from the middle to the top and then in the other tree from the middle to the bottom. These slits should be the width of the cardboard.

3 Using these slits, slot the two cardboard trees together and glue in place.

4 Stand the tree on cardboard and draw out a circular base that is as wide as the widest part of your tree.

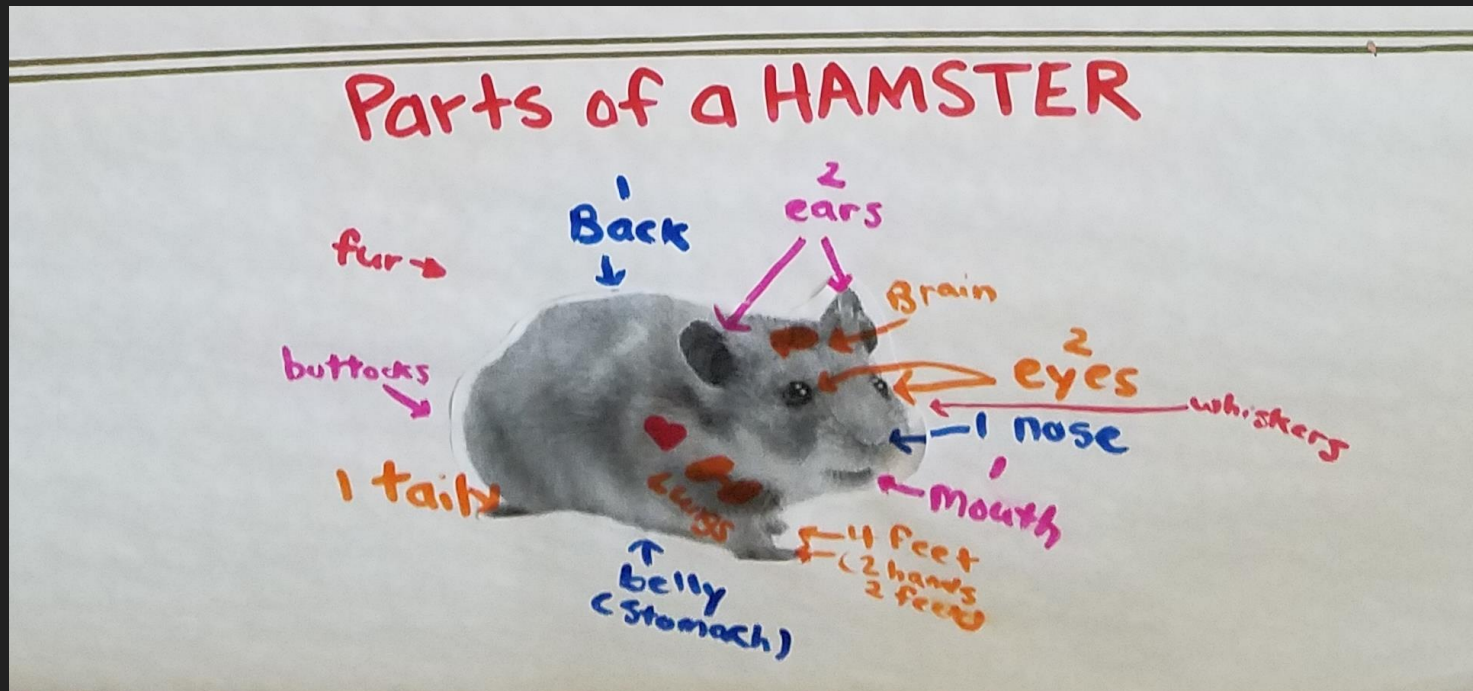
5 Cut out this base and glue the tree on top.

42 Climbing Projects

The Treehouse 43

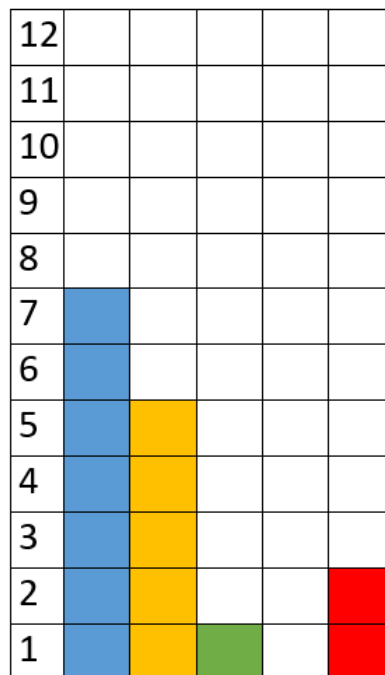
Thursday, Day 9

- **Chart:** label the parts of a hamster.
- Make a hamster with child-selected art materials and share during whole group time.
- Dance to the Hamster song.
- Roll dice with words/images of hamster doing positional words. Child with hamster head band does what the dice rolls.



Friday, Day 10

What Pet Do You Have?



- Children engage in discussion of people in their families. How many live in their house including pets? If no pet, what do they wish they had? Draw a “my family and pets” picture. Count how many are in the photo together. Write their names. Encourage drawing any significant items to go with photo (model example: my son with a guitar, the other with a skateboard, etc.) Remind them the hamsters are their pets as well, so they may draw the hamsters in their picture.
- **Chart:** Bar graph of animals. Color in boxes from bottom up of animal each child has and add up. Write number. Determine highest/lowest number. Were there any animals you have at home that were not listed?

goals

Domains

I. Personal and Social Development

- I.A. Self Concept. The students will demonstrate self-concept as they create a venn diagram to compare themselves to hamsters.
- I.B. Self Control. The students will exercise self control as they watch hamsters play in a maze without touching the hamsters or walls of the maze.
- I.C. Approaches to learning. The students will approach tasks with flexibility and inventiveness in the STEM project of creating toys for hamsters.
- I.D. Interaction with others. The students will interact with others as they search for objects the same size of the pet hamsters using yarn measured out.

II. Language and Literacy

- II.A. Listening. The students show meaning by listening as they talk about what they learned from a book read about hamsters and add to the KWL chart.
- II.B. Speaking. The students speak clearly given discussion of their hamster play equipment they created.
- II.C. Reading. The students will begin to demonstrate understanding of letters given HAMSTER on a card with magnetic letters to match beneath it.
- II.D. Writing. The students will model understanding purposes in writing as we work as a group to create a hamster story written on chart paper.

III. Mathematical Thinking

- III.A. Processes and Practices. The students will create ABA patterns given big and small hamster cut outs.
- III.B. Number. The students will show beginning understanding of number and quantity given hamster cut outs to count out to corresponding numbers.
- III.C. Operations and Algebraic Thinking. The children will apply addition and subtraction to problems with hamster food and hamster 1 and hamster 2 cut outs such as "hamster 1 has 3 pieces of food..hamster two has 2 pieces of food... how many pieces of food are there altogether?"
- III.D. Measurements. The students will participate in measuring activities given measuring a hamster with yarn, holding the yarn to a ruler to identify how many inches long, and then using yarn with partners to find object the same length.
- III.F. Geometry. The students show understanding positional words given the outdoor game of going over, under, across, and around objects while checking them off the checklist.

IV. Scientific Thinking

- A. Inquiry Skills and Practices. The students will explore the hamster water bottle, communicate observations, and give thoughts on why there is a metal ball in the tube.
- B. Physical Science. The students explore how materials change given tp to wrap around a balloon, paint with water, dry, remove balloon, and cut a hole for the hamsters to get in for use as a nest.

goals

IV. Scientific Thinking

C.Life Science.The students will explore the characteristics and needs of living things given discussion with documentation of responses. (KWL, venn diagram, labeling, list).

D.Earth Science.The students explore the bedding of the hamsters, discussing how it helps the hamsters, what happens when it gets wet, what it reminds them off, and more.

V.Social Studies

A.People, Past and Present.The students help create a chart in english, spanish, and japanese with numbers/written word numbers and corresponding quantity of cut out hamsters.

B.Human Interdependence.The students will draw their family including pets.

C.Citizenship and Government.The students will helps one another keep the posted classroom rules of our pets (hands off cage, etc.) with gentle reminders.

D.People and Where they Live.The students will draw a map of the hamster's home after creating a map of the classroom as a group.

VI.The Arts

A.Expression and Representation.The students use materials to create a hamster (clay, pom poms, tp rolls, etc.)

B.Understanding and Appreciation. The students will express positive comments dictated about artwork of a hamster.(First I will model positive comments of another object).

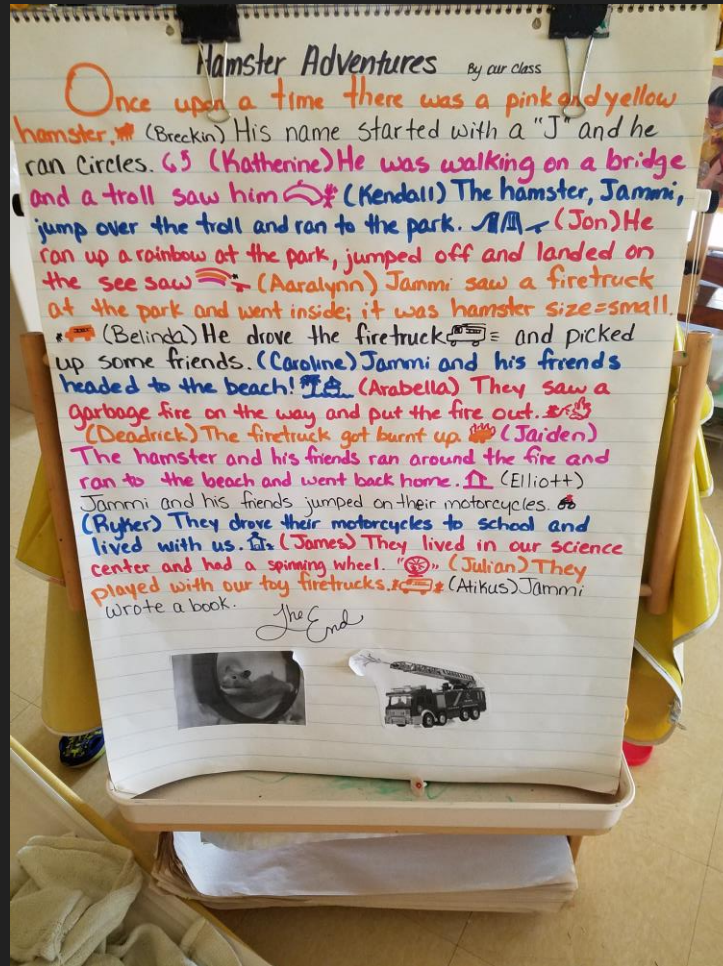
VII.Physical Development, Health, Safety.

A.Gross Motor.The students will pretend to be hamsters running an obstacle course outside. They will walk across the balance beam, crawl under a plank, go through a tunnel, run around a house, roll down a hill, and more, checking off a checklist of completed tasks.

B.Fine Motor Development.The students will use child tweezers to pick up hamster pellets (or pom poms) and put in a container to look like a hamster eating them.

C.Self-Care, Health, Safety.The students will follow posted safety rules for the pets and give one another gentle reminders to enforce them.

A hamster story created by the children



A transition to hand-washing for lunch, each theme gets a class-made story. The students tell "what happens next" and then goes to wash hands to prevent long lines and giving story creating experiences.

The children in my class ask me to draw a simple picture showing what they said. I see them using images to assist in "reading" it to their friends and families.

The children also seem to enjoy finding their names, and the names of the other students Which reinforces recognizing letters.

Misc. image sharing

KWL from separate group than earlier sample.

♥ Hamsters 🐹		
Know	What we want to know	Learned
<p>Small ears 2 eyes 1 mouth tiny tail Walks on 4 legs Can stand up on 2 legs to look around Has fur Has little fingers like we have fingers. teeth runs on a wheel</p>	<p>Do they bite? What does it eat? Will it eat a Carrot? What is that brown paper-looking stuff in its cage? What is the ball for? Does it come out of its hiding spot (every)? What is that? water bottle</p>	<p>They can bite but if you are gentle and do not scare them you can hold them without getting bitten. Eats a bag of hamster food Mix: pellet bars, sunflower seeds, bird seeds, carrots, and more... but book says NO GRAPES. Brown Paper is bedding to hide and keep clean. Ball = goes inside to roll around safely for exercise. Out at evening & night.</p>



A 4 year old child that struggles with self-control drew a picture for the hamster who she feared she hurt or scared. She asked me to write her words and asked for tape to put it up by the hamster so he could see it. Pets promote opportunity to develop empathy & practice being gentle.



The children assembled jumbo foam puzzle pieces to create a house like the hamster has in his aquarium. They were "hamsters" crawling through. Learning through acting the role.

The children created their own child-sized hamster playground for a dramatic play with gross motor challenges.

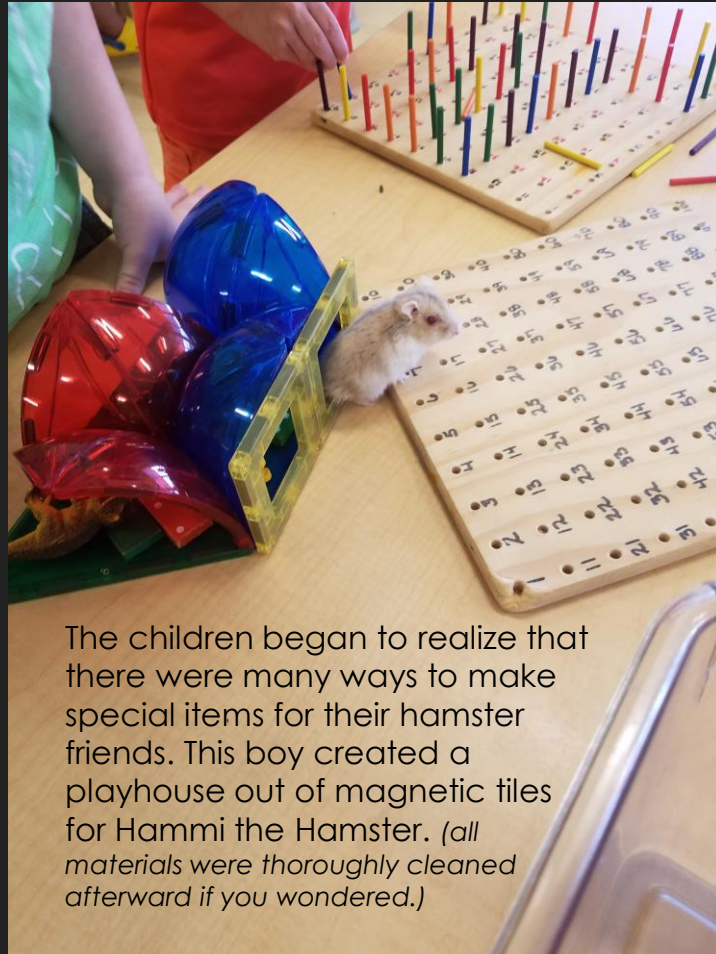


A track we assembled so that the hamsters can exercise during learning center time and not worry about getting kicked around.

Misc. image sharing



This child extended the "creating a playground" activity with manipulative game materials on his own esteem, asking if Hammi the Hamster could try out the maze.



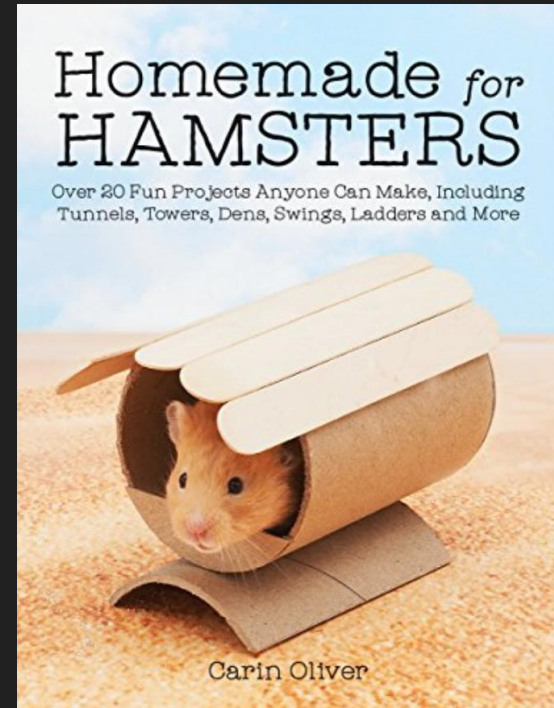
The children began to realize that there were many ways to make special items for their hamster friends. This boy created a playhouse out of magnetic tiles for Hammi the Hamster. *(all materials were thoroughly cleaned afterward if you wondered.)*

A guinea pig visited for the day so that we could compare & contrast it to the hamsters.



Books

Memoirs of Hamster by Devin Scillian
Hamster in a Hamper by Lucy Daniels
Trouble according to Humphrey by Betty Birney
Mysteries according to Humphrey by Betty Birney
Homemade for Hamster by Carin Oliver
Summer according to Humphrey by Betty Birney
My Hamster by Peter Fritzsche
Max and Mo's first day at school by Brian Floca
Max and Mo go apple picking by Brian Floca
Looking after hamsters by Brian Floca
Hamsters for kids by John Davidson
Little Animal Ark: the happy hamster by Lucy Daniels
Tiny hamster is a GIANT MONSTER by Joel Jensen
Hamster Princess: Harriet the Invincible by Ursula Vernon
A hamster named Cookie
The Hamster Book by Silvia Borando
Hamster Princess: Ratpunzel by Ursula Vernon
No more hitting for Little Hamster! by Bernette Ford
Hamster and Cheese by Colleen Venable
Let's take care of our new hamster by Garcia Sabates
My hamster and me by Peter Hollmann
Hamster chase by Anastasia Suen
Hamstersaurus Rex by Tom O'Donnell
Take your pet to the vet by Sara Miller
Teacher's Pet by Julie Andrews



Fingerplays and songs

"If You're a Pet and You Know It"

(tune: If You're Happy and You Know It)

If you're a doggie and you know it,
Say, "Woof, woof".
If you're a doggie and you know it,
Say, "Woof, woof".
If you're a doggie and you know it,
And you really want to show it,
If you're a doggie and you know it,
Say, "Woof, woof".

*Repeat with kitty/meow, fishy/blub,
hamster/run in place, bird/tweet*

BRING YOUR DOGS

(Tune: Oh, My Darling)

Bring your dogs, bring your cats,
Bring your hamsters, one by one.
I take care of the animals,
I'm a veterinarian.

Fingerplays and songs

5 Little Hamsters

Five Little Hamsters having lots of fun;
This one fell asleep in the warm spring sun.
This one was so hungry and ate all the food
Which put this one in a very bad mood!
This one raced around and around
The last one was so quiet
She never made a sound.

The Hamsters on the Wheels

The hamster on his wheel goes round and round...in his little cage.

Then he munches on his food
and, finally, he goes to sleep each night.

All accompanied by appropriate actions.

Fingerplays and songs

Hamster Head, Shoulder, Knees, & Toes

Head, shoulders twitchy nose, twitchy nose
Head, shoulders twitchy nose, twitchy nose
Eyes and ears and whiskers and toes
Head shoulders twitchy nose, twitchy nose

Pet names

My neighbor's kind of crazy (circle finger at head)

He named his dog Cat (bark, then meow)

He named his goldfish Birdy (swim, then fly)

Now what do you think of that? (shrug)

He has two mice named Sheep and Lamb (hold up two fingers and squeak, then baa)

And a hamster that's named Horse (roll hands like a hamster in a wheel, then neigh)

And when he got a brand new cat (meow) He named it Dog, of course (bark)

So when my family got a rabbit (put up hands for ears) He said, "Why don't you name it Chick!"

I said, "No way, neighbor!" (shake head) "It's our turn to pick." (point to self)

**Thank you for taking the time to
look at my presentation of some of
our hamster activities.
Pets in the classroom provide a
multitude of extraordinary
experiences.**

Amanda Foster

Arkansas State University Child Development and Research Center

Children ages 3-5