



## THEME-BASED ART PROGRAM PLAN & GUIDE (ages 4, 5 years): **TREES**

### 1st trees session:

We started the school year with the theme "les pommes" focusing all our activities around apples: graphism, maths, puppets, etc. Once the children understood the word we asked them if they know how apples grow. From there we started to talk about apple trees (le pommier) and told the children we were going to represent one with a collage.



Doris 4.4

As a first step we asked the children to represent wind on paper with paint, as fall is a windy season (i.e., you see apples on the trees in fall). With a sponge we showed them how to make a circular motion to have an impression of movement. After they were done they were given strips of brown cloth. We let them individually choose the pattern they wanted and asked them to cut small pieces out of it. The pieces would be later glued onto the paper to make a tree.

The second and last step they were shown how to glue the pieces of clothes to make a tree, first the trunk (le tronc) and then the branches (les branches). Finally they were given pieces of red paper crepon and shown how to roll them into little balls to make apples.

### 2nd trees session:

For the second session the children were taken to central park to gather little branches. They came back and were asked to represent the sky with water paint (we let them use the colors they wanted). During the second session we represented the 4 seasons on the black board and asked them to identify them. Then we told them we were going to make either a winter tree or a spring one. After they had made their choice they glued the pieces of wood they had gathered, first a thick one for the trunk and then thin ones for the branches.

Many of them were frustrated because the pieces wouldn't stay in place as they were not exactly flat and also their hands were very gluey. In general the children don't like having their hands full of glue and don't want to wait until the end of the session to go wash them, they want to go right away and then come back. Sophia is one of the only ones who is not bothered with glue on her hands. She likes peeling it off when it's dry.

We put scotch tape on top of the branches to hold them in place, which relieved the children. For the winter trees we gave them cotton that they rolled into snowflakes. I heard many children enjoying the softness of cotton on their hands. They took quite a long time to roll the cotton into balls, I think to enjoy it longer. Noah glued many of them on his because he wanted to represent a snow-storm in Vermont (his family has a house there). This time the glue didn't bother them, the cotton balls being so thick they barely had their hands in contact with the glue. No comments about glue this time. For the spring trees we gave them popcorn that they had seen pop at the beginning of class, to represent the flowers.



Lily 3.5



Julia 4.2



Georgia 4.4



Noah 4.5

**3rd tree session:**

For the 3rd session of trees we took the children to central park, sat them on grass in an open field with trees to observe, not too far from the subject. Once more we asked them to describe the trees. "The trunk is tall", "it's high", "they are many branches", "it's brown", "it's little, there are leaves", etc. After that we gave them each a piece of paper and asked them to pick a tree among those they could see and draw it. They represented with more or less accuracy what they could see. Georgia drew hers exactly the way it was, from the trunk to the leaves:

Noah used more of his imagination, he wanted to draw the mountains of Vermont with a tree in the back, but forgot the tree.

Anais was the only one saying she couldn't draw it but after some explanation of how she should start with the trunk she began a great drawing and even drew a horse that we saw passing by in the park:



Anais 4.8

The children really enjoyed going to the park to draw trees, they were behaving as if it was the first time they were going to the park. The drawing session was a new experience for them and they took it to the heart carefully observing the subject., They took their time, proceeded deliberately and listened intently to instructions.

The final trees session was a collage on black paper of a white tree or on white paper of a black tree. This session was to show them they can use their imagination in representing a tree not necessarily brown, and that it can still look like a tree if it's not its real color.

We gave them different sizes of black and white paper to glue, introducing them first to the roots, explaining what the roots are for and where they are.

Some decided to represent the roots, some didn't. They glued first the trunk. Some of the children wanted to make a very high trunk, "to the sky" that's why you will see trunks going to the top of the paper. Notice that Nina's tree is very symmetrical. She took all her time gluing right and then left, right again, and left again. Cassie began at the top, then went down in parallel. Same reaction with the glue – they don't like the feeling on their hands. We have decided that next time we will invite them to paint their own tree with no directives given.



Nina 4.5

Transcribed by Aurelie Boqaur