



Mary's Monthly News

A Little Groundhog Day History

Adapted from "Groundhog Day: 1886 to 1992" by Bill Anderson

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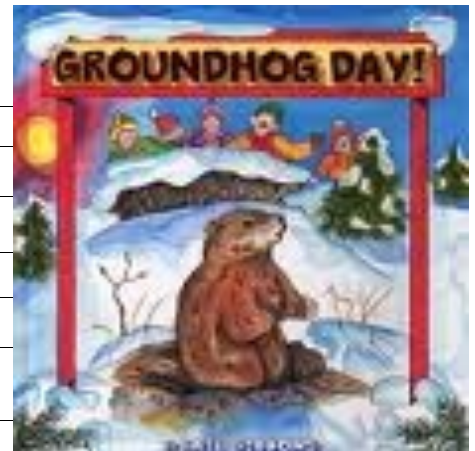
Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that traverses centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives. It is the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow. If he sees it, he regards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole.

If the day is cloudy and hence, shadow-less, he takes it as a sign of spring and stays above ground.

The groundhog tradition stems from similar beliefs associated with Candle-man's Day in Europe, and for centuries the custom was to have the clergy bless candles and distribute them to the people. Even then, it marked a milestone in the winter and the weather that day was important.

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Technical Assistance

Starting in February, I will sit down with each director and take a look at page 2 and 3 of your SR contract. The focus and goal will be to improve the Developmentally Appropriate Practices in each domain to match the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards per your curriculum. Before I sit down with you, please take a good look at these pages. Review your Florida State Standards book and compare them with your curriculum. I am including another copy of pages 2 & 3 with this newsletter. I am also including an ELIS Project update, a copy of the children/teens vaccination sheet and February Activities sheet. Each month in this newsletter I, will focus on a domain from the standards. This month I'm focusing on:

Language and Communication Standards

Children advance their language and communication development through learning opportunities in five primary component areas: Listening, Speaking, Vocabulary, Sentences and Structure, and Conversation. Make sure to set examples of good listening skills to your children. When they are talking to you or asking a question, look them in the eyes, say their name when you speak to them or answer their question. Give them your undivided attention. Speak clearly to each child so they understand what you are saying to them. Their brain needs to process the vocabulary you use with them, so it tells them how to respond to you. Vocabulary is huge! Use word walls in your classrooms. Introduce new words that a child understands daily during your group time or story time. Add these words to your word wall. Demonstrate complete and correct sentence structure. Children will expand their use of complete sentences and demonstrate growing mastery of correct structure in the way they arrange their words. Make sure you have "conversations" with your children. Don't just "talk" to them. Children will gain more sophisticated understanding of conversation and how to modify their speaking patterns for different contexts and settings if you set the good examples for them first.

Crafts with Children

Valentine's Class Book



Children dictate the rest of the sentence: "I love ____" and draw a picture to illustrate. To make your class books, use "presentation book covers" from an office supply store or Wal-mart. It has a sturdy plastic cover with a clear insert, and the pages are also clear inserts. Just slip in a page for the front cover, and slip in the children's pages inside. These can be reused.

*****CONGRATULATIONS*****

Green Gables Learning Tree on your accreditation. Way to go!!

Literacy Corner

- *I spy Little Hearts* by Jean Marzollo
- *Pocket Kisses* by Willa Perllman
- *Ten Grouchy Groundhogs* by Katherine Helmig
- *The Hat* by Jan Brett
- *Wake up Groundhog* by Susanna Leonard Hill
- *Marley Looks for Love* by John Grogan



VPK News

VPK Focus

Number Sense

Instructional Strategy

During circle time, include opportunities to compare two sets of objects to determine if one set has less. For Example: comparing the number of children wearing jeans to the number of children wearing shorts in the class. You can use anything to compare. Then chart your findings.

Inclusion News

FROM "THE INCLUSION CORNER"

Our workshop this quarter is called "Time In or Time Out"

What is the real purpose of "time out" and who is (or is not) benefiting?

Monday, February 28th, 2011

6-8 PM

Columbia County Public Library

Presenter: Dottie Stone

(386) 961-0145

dstone@elc-fg.org



Upcoming Trainings

Count on Math - Incorporating Math into All Classrooms

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

6:00—8:00pm

Florida Gateway College (Allied Health Building Auditorium)

Presented by: *Mary Gamble*

CPR/First Aid Training Dates for 2011:

March 19th—CPR 8:00am and First Aid 1:00pm

May 21st—CPR 8:00am and First Aid 1:00pm

Cooking with Kids

Sweet Heart Krispie Treats

This colorful new twist on a classic treat is a great gift for your child to give to anyone she's sweet on this February 14.

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 3 tablespoons margarine
- 6 cups mini (or 60 regular-size) marshmallows
- Red food coloring
- 9 cups Rice Krispies cereal
- Heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Plastic bags, yarn



Instructions

- To begin, lightly coat a 10- by 15-inch baking sheet with cooking spray and set it aside.
- Melt the margarine in a large pot over low heat. Add the marshmallows, stirring them continuously until they melt. Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in drops of red food coloring until the color receives a thumbs-up from the chef.
- Add the Rice Krispies, stirring until they are evenly coated with marshmallow. Spoon the mixture onto the baking sheet.
- With waxed paper (or lightly buttered hands), smooth out the mixture, spreading it to an even thickness.
- Cut out hearts with the cookie cutter. Place each heart in a clear plastic bag, tie on a yarn bow, and they're ready for giving. Makes seven 5-inch hearts.



VERY IMPORTANT

***Remember to check the
DCF Website for updates!***

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FEBRUARY, 2011

2/2 Groundhog Day

2/14 Valentines Day

2/21 President's Day

2/22 Math Workshop

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