



WHIMSICAL PLAY WITH AMY

By. Amy Jayne Ramsey



Hello and welcome to Whimsical Play with Amy. The natural curiosities and wonders from children in the early years foundation stage are what make each day so magical.

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Pumpkin Investigation at the Mud Kitchen



What do we know about pumpkins?

Take a look at how to turn your mud kitchen area into a pumpkin inquiry for little learners, enriched with herbs and dried flowers. As it starts to get cooler in Chiangmai, the mornings are misty and the air is fresh.

We asked each family to bring a pumpkin that the children helped pick. It could be big, small, orange, green, smooth or bumpy. Picking the right pumpkin is all part of the learning experience.

We arranged the different pumpkins all over the mud kitchen and we dissected a few, adding the seeds and pulp to the play provocation for the children to explore. We also added some early literacy letter log chips and some pinecones from our walk.



Pumpkins & Water



Having our own ways to do things

The children each had a unique way and process to explore the pumpkins. We noticed that the pumpkins were all different sizes and some were heavier than others. Some of the children enjoyed lifting and carrying the pumpkins, transporting them to different spaces during play. We also explored which pumpkins could fit inside of the different containers. The children noticed how the pumpkins moved around in the water and explored sink and float concepts. They used the stems of the pumpkin to move them back and fourth creating movement in the water.

Collaborative Learning Opportunities



Unique Creations

. Mud kitchens are wonderful for sparking curiosity and encouraging children to explore together, get messy and have fun. The children found different ways to collaborate and develop ideas together. They filled a pumpkin with water and then began adding natural items and halloween sprinkles. They particularly enjoyed using the different sized shakers and they were fascinated by the different herbs we had popped on to the table. The children used the wooden spoons and magic wands to stir the magic pumpkin potion creation. They took turns exploring the different items, noticing how their creation developed. This activity is a wonderful way to enrich sensory play in the provision with high levels of engagement and the children have open ended access to exploring real life items which are familiar to them in the world around them. Remember to scoop and count the seeds and pulp together with the children, this is all part of the fun and adds to the full experience.



"Pumpkin Soup"
Sean - 3 years

"Magic Pumpkin"
Maverick
- 3 years



Observational Paintings



Remember to give children plenty of opportunities to closely engage with the pumpkins. Tactile experiences contribute to the full experience and enjoyment during play. You can put out some pumpkins with some white paper and orange and green paint for the children to explore. The children can then create their own research, noting the different patterns and features of the pumpkins. You could also cut open a pumpkin and paint what the inside of the pumpkin looks like. Each child's painting will be unique in their own way as they personally build on what they already know. You could then add the paintings to a display or a class research book to look back on and reflect on all the wonderful creations.



**"The play dough smells like
pumpkin spice yum"**

Mav - 3 years



"I see 4 and 6 seeds"
Mulan - 3 years



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ideas and inspirations

