Painting With Food Coloring

Age: Preschool-age (3-4 years)

This activity helps your child's development in this domain: Physical, Cognitive

What You Need:

- Coffee filters or paper towels
- Food coloring
- Bowls or aluminum pans
- Eyedropper and/or small spoon
- Old newspapers
- Water
- White glue (such as Elmer’s Glue®*) or tape

What To Do:

1. Cover the table with a thick layer of old newspapers.
2. Mix small amounts of food coloring and water. Use one bowl for each color.
3. Show your child how to use an eyedropper by squeezing the rubber bulb while holding the tip in the liquid and letting go to fill the dropper, then squeezing the bulb again to squirt out the liquid. Let your child experiment with an eyedropper by dripping colored water on the newspaper. (If you do not have an eyedropper, use a small spoon.)
4. Let him explore what happens when he drips the colored water onto a coffee filter or paper towel. Ask him to describe what happens.
5. Place his artwork on clean newspapers to dry and invite him to make another one.
6. Display your child’s colorful creations either by mounting them on colored construction paper or by framing the art pieces and then hanging them in a window to let the light shine through.
VARIATIONS:

1. Straw Painting: Drop small amounts of colored water onto white paper. Using a drinking straw, have your child blow the colored water to create designs.

2. Batik Designs: Fold a paper towel in half and then in quarters. Let your child dot the colored water on the towels using an eyedropper or tip of a spoon. Unfold the towel to see the batik pattern. Point out the similarity in each of the four sections of the unfolded paper towel. Ask your child to describe the patterns.

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