

Brain Builders

Week #2

Brain Appetizer

Heads & Bunny Tails

- Stand up tall
- Place one hand on the base of your skull
- Place the other hand at the base of your spine (tail)
- Rub both areas vigorously for 30-60 seconds
- Option: do with eyes closed for more calming effect (reduces visual distractions & enhances proprioception) and/or add humming



Main Course: Brain Circuit Training™

Windmills

- Stand tall with your arms outstretched above your head (the victory pose)
- Bend down and touch your right hand to your left foot
- Come back up
- Switch and bend down touching your left hand to your right foot
- Do for one minute
- Option: do the beat of a metronome @ 54 beats per minute or to music
- Modification (more sensory input): turn head and eyes to look at the raised hand (do not do if this makes you too dizzy)



Cheeri-O's

- Stand tall with good posture
 - Bring your left arm out to your side at the height of your shoulder
 - Start with making a "Cheeri-O" by touching the tips of your thumb and index finger together
 - Then touch your thumb and middle finger, thumb and ring finger and thumb and pinky
 - Repeat the sequence 6 times without looking at your hand
 - Switch to the right hand and do the same 6 times without looking at your hand
 - Do both hands together 6 times with your eyes closed
 - Modifications: To make more challenging stand with feet together and/or on a sofa cushion or balance cushion. If a child has a hard time doing with not looking, allow them to look at their hands to begin with.
- Note: Do not do "squishy O's" (flat surface of fingers; be sure to just touch finger tips)



Bunny Hop

- Hop on your right leg 5 times to your right, 5 times to your left, 5 times forwards, and 5 times backwards.
- Switch to the left leg and do the same
- Hop in place on the right leg turning around in circles 5 times clockwise and 5 times counterclockwise.
- Switch to the left leg and do the same
- Options: During step #1, parent or teacher call out the direction they are to hop (forward, backward, right, left) switching it up every 3-5 hops or hop to the beat of a metronome @ 54 beats per minute or to music
- Modifications: If a child is unable to hop on one foot, have them start with both feet



Sensational Activities

Week #2

Ice Eggs

Classification:

Indoors or Outdoors

What you need:

Balloons

Small toys (suggested: baby chicks, dinosaurs, baby snakes, anything that hatches from eggs)

Water

Glitter

What to do:

Place one small toy inside each balloon then carefully fill the balloon with water and tie it off. Put them in the freezer, taking care not to squash them out of shape against anything so that they retain their lovely egg shapes (putting them in a paper cup and laying sideways can be helpful).

Wait until they're completely solid, then remove from the freezer and the balloon will peel away easily. Then, sprinkle each one with lots of glitter to make them even more magical looking! Then, decide where you want to put them- in a basket, make a treasure hunt with them, etc.

For problem solving skills, ask the kiddos, "How can we help them to hatch out?!" Have the children try and come up with some methods and materials they might need, then see what they try out (forks, wooden spoons, candles to melt the egg, hammer, spray water on them, etc.)

Rainbow Sensory Chickpeas



Classification:

Indoors

What you need:

Large bag of dried chickpeas

Liquid watercolors or natural food coloring

Large plastic zip lock bags

What to do:

For each color of the rainbow, put 1.5 cups of chickpeas and about 5-8 squirts of liquid watercolor in a plastic bag. Then let the kiddos shake and mix the contents until the chickpeas are well coated. You may need to add more liquid watercolors to get complete bean coverage. Adding a few squirts at first and then adding one additional squirt at a time until they are well coated is suggested.

Chickpeas are great sensory bin fillers! They are heavier than dyed oats or salt or rice or coconut and they offer a lot more tactile input to sensory seeking kids. That means they are also a lot more noisy than other sensory bin fillers, but kiddos like that part too!

Fill a plastic storage tub so the bottom is covered with the chickpeas and several inches deep and let kiddos dive into with their hands and feet. Hide “hidden treasure” like plastic toys, letter or shapes and see if they can find them without looking (only by feel); you may want to use a blindfold. For smaller kiddos, let them sit in the bin and older kiddos or parents can push them around like they are riding in car or train!

Fizzy Egg Science Surprise

Classification:

Indoors or Outdoors

What you need:

Baking Soda

Food Coloring or Liquid Watercolors

Water

Pipettes (eye droppers)

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White Vinegar
Plastic Eggs
Safety Goggles
Plastic toys (small to hide inside eggs)
Mixing Bowl
Whisk or Spoon for mixing
Parchment Paper
Shallow pan

What to do:

- Add 3 cups of baking soda to a large bowl
- Add a few drops of liquid watercolor or food coloring to the baking soda and mix. Remember, food coloring can stain skin and surfaces. If you will be using your hands at all for mixing you will probably want to wear gloves. Cover your table or counter-top to protect it from staining.
- After your baking soda and food coloring are thoroughly mixed, add 1/4 cup of water. You will know your mixture is ready when it begins to form a paste. If your mixture is too dry, you may need to add a bit more water.
- When your mixture has the consistency of paste, you can add it to one half of a plastic egg. If you don't have any plastic eggs, you can easily shape the mixture into balls using your hands.
- Insert a plastic toy and fill the other half of the egg with paste. Close the egg to completely cover the toy inside.
- Remove the baking soda eggs from the plastic mold and place them on parchment paper in the freezer for at least an hour or more.
- Remove your eggs from the freezer and place them in a shallow pan.
- Pour white vinegar into a bowl. If you have goggles and would like to use them, introduce them to the children and explain their importance and purpose.
- Now let the fun begin! Have your kiddos fill pipettes (eye droppers) with vinegar. When the vinegar is squeezed on the eggs they will begin to fizz. Encourage them to continue squeezing the vinegar on the eggs until the dinosaurs are completely uncovered.

*This recipe will make approximately 3 eggs

Sensational Snacks

Week #2

Oatmeal Peanut Butter Easter Eggs



Ingredients:

2 ½ cups gluten free rolled oats
3 tbsp gluten free “pb2” (or any powdered peanut butter)
¼ cup natural maple syrup
1 tsp. vanilla
5 tbsps. unsweetened almond milk
1 tbsp. natural nut butter (peanut, almond, cashew, etc.)
¼ cup mini dark chocolate chips (optional)
Natural (no dye) sprinkles for decoration (optional)
Plastic eggs

Instructions:

In a medium bowl mix dry ingredients and set aside.
In a large bowl add maple syrup, vanilla, milk and peanut butter.
Stir until mixture has been combined, add the dry ingredient to the large bowl and mix with hands.
Once combined add chocolate chips and sprinkles.
Place in plastic eggs and let set in the fridge for 1 hour.
Once done, gently open them from the plastic eggs and decorate with sprinkles (optional).