

## Early Childhood Adaptive Art Strategies for a Snow Party

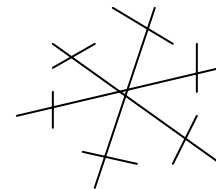
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Working with early childhood (EC) students in art can be an exciting experience! In my 17 years in Milwaukee Public Schools, I have truly enjoyed developing activities with the classroom teachers that are sensory and thematic based. As it is the winter season, there are wonderful opportunities to facilitate creating SNOW in the classroom in a variety of mediums. One of my favorites is to use stuffing or Fibrefill™. It is great for having in a class snowball party! The Fibrefill™ is soft, pliable in one's hands, lightweight enough to throw, but also lightweight enough not to hurt anything or anyone. It floats gently toward the intended area, and takes a little accuracy to get it there! Another good gross and fine motor activity is to PULL the Fibrefill™ apart to make pieces to throw. The students will love tossing the "snow" into buckets, boxes, and other containers of various sizes. Pull it out and start over! They can use plastic shovels to push the snow around and put into containers as well. An extension activity is to then create a picture of the snow experience. The students can use a

piece of light blue construction paper (9"x12"), white crayons (in regular or oversized as needed), white tempera paint in flat lid containers masking taped on the bottom to the tables (adding a teaspoon of liquid soap to the paint will help in cleanup), paintbrushes (some students may need an adapted paintbrush with a large handle), silver glitter, glue and Fibrefill™. The students can begin by coloring with the white crayon on the paper; some may be able to copy a teacher's simple snowflake (three lines crossed in the middle and then each of the six lines dashed (see picture)). There may be some students that might need to have their paper masking taped to the work surface. Teachers might show visuals of other snowflakes for inspiration.

After they are done making either scribbles or snowflakes, they can push the paint brushes into the white paint and paint a quick snowstorm over the crayons with three or four swipes of the brush. The crayons will resist the paint and show through. It takes but a few minutes to dry, or the next part can wait until the next day. Repeating the pulling of the Fibrefill™, the students pull "little

bitty pieces" and glue five or more little pieces onto the picture, over areas that don't have quite so much crayon and paint. A glue stick can work with this, or the Tap-n-Glue™ cap from Discount School Supply ([www.discount-schoolsupply.com](http://www.discount-schoolsupply.com)) which eliminates the puddling of glue problem that many EC classes experience. After ALL that, the teacher can take the art piece and lay it on the floor in the cover of a copy paper box. Using a regular bottle of glue that flows, the students can be directed or hand over hand assisted to drizzle glue over the picture of snow. While shaking glitter over the picture, the student's shrills of delight will fill the room! The teacher can carefully then tap off the glitter into the box and recycle it back into the glitter container as needed. When completed, the students have a very visual and tactile experience of the snow party!



## Websites to Visit

MPS staff suggest the following sites:

<http://Crayon.net>

Reluctant readers need different strategies to engage their learning. A number of teachers have found this site (which allows them to create their own newspaper). The free template is linked to other news sources around the world. Some students may still need support tools such as text-to-speech to help them process the information gathered.

<http://www.education-world.com>

Lots of resources and materials for classroom teachers. The technology

section has had some very good resources.

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org>

Many links to other great sites are organized for students, teachers and parents. Be sure to check out the Awesome TALKING Library.

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide>

This is considered a premier web collection of links for teachers. Everything from slide shows to web quests and current trends in education. There are two large communities of special education technology that connect teachers, staff and parents. They are listservs, so you'll need to

subscribe to them to gain access.

<http://www.qiat.org>

(QIAT) Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, pronounced like the word quiet. The QIAT Consortium is a nationwide grassroots group that includes hundreds of individuals who provide input into the ongoing process of identifying, disseminating, and implementing a set of widely-applicable Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in school settings.