

37 - Preschool Themed Snacks and Sensory Bins

Original Air Date: 12/29/21

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Audience: Current Active & Enrolled Students

Episode Transcript

Host Dr. Shipley Speaker: Hello everyone and welcome to Early Childhood Chatter with Dr. Shipley and Dr. Heald. We will upload a new episode every other week on Wednesdays.

Host Dr. Heald Speaker: Twice a month, we will come to you with a 10-minute professional development that you can quickly listen to for new ideas to try.

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Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker: Today, we have with us Dr. Juliet Krummick. She has worked for UAGC since 2011, teaching graduate and undergraduate Early Childhood Education courses.

Her work experience includes working in a faith-based preschool, teaching public elementary students from kinder through fourth grade and adults. Juliet, thank you so much for being here. We're excited that you have taken your time to come and share this awesome topic.

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Thank you so much for having me today. I'm very excited to share some new ideas with both of you.

Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker: Juliet, I am just so excited to have you here.

You shared some great things at the Early Childhood Education virtual conference, and we're just so delighted that you've come as a follow-up because you just always have great ideas and knowledge. So, the title of your session is one of my favorite topics for all of those of you that know me know that I never turn down a good snack.

So, Dr. Krummick presented preschool themed snacks.

So, can you tell us why you decided to talk about this topic?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Oh, sure. Well, I love snacks too. So, we definitely have that in common.

So, the reason I incorporated both of these, well, snacks and sensory bins together was to include more focused on five senses. The five senses shouldn't be something that we only include in a themed unit. We need to dive in and really develop all the senses all the time.

We can do this easily through snacks and the sensory bins. So, by using snacks, we can incorporate taste, smell, and touch too. Sensory bins can include smell, touch, sound, and sight.

Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker: Perfect. I love it. I did some of this in my classroom too.

So, I love to hear others' perspectives. So, tell me a little bit about the snacks that you want to share.

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Okay, sure.

So, there's so many good snacks out there. But my favorites tend to be snacks that I can provide a base to and then let students add their own toppings. So, take banana sushi, for example.

All you need is an unpeeled banana, spread flavored cream cheese. My favorite is the pecans with that sweet honey. Oh, so yummy.

Students can then have toppings options such as cut fruit. I provide options that include blackberries, blueberries, kiwi, banana, apricots, and raspberries. If you add all those fruit toppings together, you create your own rainbow.

This snack could be cut up into pieces and look just like sushi you could pick up at the store. It's so appealing to look at and delicious too. I know you can just see those colors and smell that freshness.

Oh, so good. So, another great idea is using a pancake as a base for a spring snack. You can provide different options that might include the berries, bananas, half grapes, and cream cheese.

I really like the cream cheese as a follow-up to my base. Young children can create their own creations with different items. So, they can include or make a flower or a butterfly.

These healthy snacks are delicious but fun to create. Children can make their own by deciding the items and being creative on their own. Oh, wait, there's one more I want to tell you about.

And I was kind of surprised that it was such a big hit. So, making animal tracks. I know, animal tracks for snacks.

Let me explain. So, if you provide crackers as a base, cut up some cheese, have options of pretzels, cubed ham, cream cheese. Again, I love cream cheese.

It kind of acts like glue. Those chow mein noodles that you can put on salad and half grapes as options to add. Children can access their prior knowledge and consider animal tracks that they've seen before or create their own version of a new type of animal.

These are all fun and delicious snacks that allow for kids to be creative and have a healthy snack option.

Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker: Dr. Krummick, you have so many great ideas. And I'm not going to tell you that you are not making me hungry, but we want to transition into some sensory bins because you're right.

These snacks do indeed, you know, obviously appeal to the taste buds and we can smell it and then we can see the colors that you're sharing. So, thinking about sensory bins, you know, how is that? What do you want to share about sensory bins with teachers and how they can try them in their environment?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Oh, sure. So, I love sensory bins just as much as snacks.

So, there are some different elements that you can use to create a wonderful experience for your explorers and my explorers. There are so many different bases. Again, that base really kind of provides our whole plethora of different exploration and creative ideas.

So, all you need is a base. So, let's have different, we have different options. So, we can have beans or rice, playground sand, shaving cream and quicksand.

You heard right, quicksand. So, you can easily make this with two parts cornstarch, one part water and one tablespoon of cocoa powder. Mix them together and you have created a substance with the same effects of quicksand.

I've used the quicksand recipe with dinosaurs and it's definitely a winner. So, another quick and easy thing to try is trying something in different temperature. So, try adding some shaving cream to a bowl, add some plastic creatures and maybe a little blue food coloring and put it in the freezer.

I had a student tell me that it feels like touching ice cream. So, I'm not sure he actually touched ice cream before, but I'll take his word for it.

Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker: I love it.

This is so exciting because I used to cook at least once a week. I tried in my classroom, and I had sensory bins also to kind of incorporate and I could actually put the cooking stuff in my sensory bins, different things that I was cooking. It just depends because cooking doesn't just have to be eating.

You could also make foam. You can do science experiments. I love this.

I would like to ask why are sensory bins so important in an early childhood classroom?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Great question. So sensory bins allow time for students to explore and be creative as well as support sensory development. The most important bins seem to be the ones that have items that students can manipulate themselves.

For example, I've added playground sand, blue tissue paper, rocks, sticks, Lego people. I've seen students be creative and build tents with the sticks or use the sticks in the sand to support the tissue paper laid out flat. So, it looks like the water and the sand at the bottom of the ocean.

Providing the elements to support creativity while supporting sensory development will support endless fun and exploration.

Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker: I love that. You know, you've talked so much about this, but it's so extremely important.

So just one more time. Why is learning the five senses so important as a part of the learning process?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Sure. I feel like it's just like that old Chinese proverb.

When I hear, I forget. When I see, I remember. When I do, I understand.

So, we can provide all those different senses. We are building knowledge, memories, and understanding together. It's not enough to just see a snack or a sensory bin.

We need to hear how it sounds, feel the texture on our fingers, and smell the different elements. Using your five senses will allow children a chance to learn with multiple senses for support.

Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker: So, these are amazing.

And I want to remind everyone just really quick that you did present at the Early Childhood Conference and they can go and watch your entire presentation, which was amazing, on our UAGC Early Childhood YouTube channel because you show pictures of all of the different things. So, if you're interested, you can go there and watch that. But as we wrap up, what are three takeaways for the listeners that you would like them to know?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Sure.

I would say children can learn so much through sensory bins and eating healthy snacks. The second would be you can create snacks that are healthy, delicious, and kid-approved. And I would say the third one is to use sensory bins to increase that sensory learning.

Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker: That's so great. Those really summarize the presentation both at the conference and here. So, Juliette, we always leave our listeners with a challenge.

So, what challenge do you have for our listeners?

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Sure. So, it can be difficult to develop ideas for snacks that are healthy and fun. I would challenge the listeners to be creative with snack time to get young learners excited about eating healthy.

I would also encourage use of sensory bins to allow for more play and creativity as well as increase that sensory development.

Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker: This is perfect. I'm just trying to take everything in.

So, it's wonderful. I think that if nothing else, you're reminding teachers that cooking in the classroom is important, right? Using sensory bins, and you can actually cook in those and make different sensory items, is important. So, thank you so much.

And again, if you would like to see Dr. Krummick's presentation from the Early Childhood Conference, it will be in the notes section. So go there and we will tell you how to watch her presentation. Thank you, Juliet.

Dr. Juliet Krummick Speaker: Thank: you so much.