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We Care

**A Curriculum for
Preschool Through Kindergarten**

Bertie Kingore & Glenda Higbee

Dedication

Wonderful husband and friend who encouraged us to be all we can be;

Enthusiastic daughter and sons who knew we could do it;

Caring parents who nurtured us as children and adults;

All the teachers and children at the schools and centers who participated in the field testing;

Rewarding feelings that result from creating;

Educators of young children everywhere who honor children as the promise of a fulfilling future.

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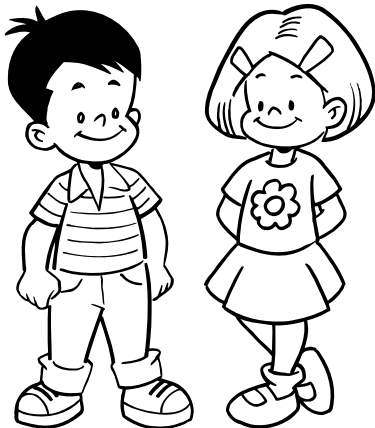
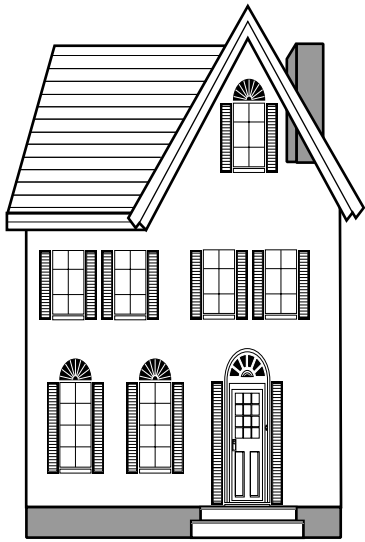
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September Curriculum

Marvelous Me
Our Families and Where We Live



Marvelous Me

CONCEPTS

- Every person is unique and special.
- Everyone can do some things well. We can learn to do many new things.
- Everyone has feelings. We feel happy, sad, scared, angry, tired, and surprised.
- Everyone has a body with many parts. Children's bodies grow bigger and bigger until they are adults.
- Everyone can be a friend and have a friend.

CONTINUING CONCEPTS

- **Colors** Have children wear their favorite color and explain why it is their favorite.
- **Geometric Shapes** Relate the shape of a circle to the shape of a face.
- **Health and Nutrition** Have children make a graph to show which fruit is liked most by the greatest number of children. Make fruit salad.
Discuss the importance of cleanliness.
Identify parts of the body.
- **Senses** Have children close their eyes and identify pieces of fruit, first using only smell and then only taste.
Discuss the parts of the body we use to identify objects through our sense of touch.
- **Traditional Rhymes and Tales** Recite "The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe" with the children.

PORTFOLIO PRODUCTS

Refer to Portfolios for Young Children, page xvi, for an overview of the purpose and value of this important assessment tool. During the first month of school, many teachers recommend selecting two to four products to establish benchmarks of each child's readiness and skill levels. While the teacher or children must always determine the most appropriate products for the portfolio, some suggestions follow to guide selection.

- Look What I Can Do books (see p. 8) are useful for assessing children's concept and skill development at the beginning of the year. Plan to repeat the same tasks in another Look What I Can Do book in the middle of the year and at the end of the year to document growth.
- Include each child's completed Cut-Paper Person (see p. 4) and Marvelous Me poem (see p. 7) in the portfolio to celebrate the uniqueness of the child and to assess emergent literacy skills, oral language skills, and fine-motor development.

ART

* Friendship Tree

Materials: tree branch; coffee can; plaster of Paris; construction paper; marking pen

"Plant" a real tree branch in a coffee can filled with plaster of Paris that is still wet. Place a label that reads "Friendship Tree" on the coffee can or on a wall above the tree. After the plaster of Paris has dried, use the friendship tree to display children's completed artwork. When finished using the tree for this purpose, consider storing it until you are ready to use it to display a new art project.

* Handy Me Booklets

Materials: construction paper; crayons; scissors; yardstick; tempera paints; paper plates; paintbrushes (optional)

Trace each child's left hand on a folded piece of construction paper, positioning the hand so that the left side is against the fold line. Cut out the paper hand, leaving the fold uncut, so that you end up with a hand-shaped booklet that opens, as shown.

Have children print their name in large letters on the outside. Weigh and measure the height of each child and then record these measurements on the inside of his or her booklet.

Provide small amounts of tempera paint on paper plates. Encourage children to decorate their hand booklet by dipping one thumb in the paint or painting their fingertip with a paintbrush and then making thumb prints all over the outside of the booklet.



* Celebration of Marvelous Me Place Mats and Artistic Cups

Materials: 12" x 18" construction paper; scissors; white paper or Styrofoam® cups; crayons or markers

Have each child make a special place mat and cup for the Celebration of Marvelous Me party discussed on page 9.

Place mats: Give each child a piece of construction paper and scissors. Have the children make a fringe around the paper by making 1-inch cuts on each side. Then have them draw a picture in the center of the paper. Print each child's name in large letters under his/her picture.

Artistic cups: Give each child a cup. Use a marker to print each child's name near the top edge of the cup. Have children decorate their cup using a crayon or marker in their favorite color. (Pretest the markers to ensure that the ink does not come off the cups and stain children's hands.)

* Cut-Paper People: Marvelous Me Poem

Materials: mirrors; construction paper; scissors; glue

Talk about similarities and differences in children's appearances. For example, discuss the fact that we all have two hands, two eyes, and one head, but we are different heights and have different hair colors. Provide mirrors so that children may study and talk about their own features.

Have children complete the Marvelous Me poems described on pages 7–8. Then have them use their poems to complete a cut-paper person. The paper on which the poem is displayed is used as the trunk of the body. Have the children cut a circle for a head and glue it on the top edge of the poem paper. Then have them cut out facial features and hair that resemble their own to add to the head. Model how to cut strips for arms and legs or jeans. Encourage the children to add hands, shoes, jewelry, hats, and so forth, so that each cut-paper person looks like the child making it. The completed cut-paper people celebrate the uniqueness of each child.

* Shaving Cream Faces

Materials: shaving cream

Put a small amount of shaving cream on a tabletop. Show the children how to spread out the cream to make a smooth area. Draw a circle in the cream. Discuss how a head is shaped like a circle. Add eyes, a nose, a mouth, ears, hair, and other details as children suggest them. Lightly rub over the area to erase the picture and then draw it again. Then put a small amount of shaving cream on the tabletop for each child, and let them spread the cream and draw faces.

To record the activity, take a picture of each child standing by his or her shaving cream face. You may wish to display the pictures on a wall or door, at the children's eye level, with their names under the pictures.

* Something I Do Well; Something I Do Not Do Well

Share with the children things you do well and do not do well. Discuss different things the children think they do well and do not do well. Point out that everyone does some things well but no one does everything well. Explain that we are all here to learn to do some things better. Have children fold a large piece of paper in half and draw what they do well on one half and what they don't do well on the other.

* Hanging Soap Creations

Materials: ingredients for Soap Creations (see Appendix II, p. 275); electric mixer; wax paper; 24-inch pieces of wide yarn, in the children's favorite colors

Knot together the two ends of each piece of yarn. Let each child select a piece of yarn in a favorite color. Have the children measure the soap flakes and water, pour them into a large mixing bowl, and take turns helping you to hold the electric mixer. The mixture should have a thick, clay-like consistency.

Give about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the mixture on a piece of wax paper to each child. Have children knead, squeeze, and explore the mixture for a minute or so. Talk about how it looks, feels, and smells.

Show children how to mold the soap into a desired shape around the knot of one piece of yarn, and then have them mold their own shapes. Set the shapes aside to dry.

Suggest that children wear their soap creation at bath time. Talk about how a clean body helps contribute to a healthy, “marvelous me.”

* Everyone Has Feelings (A Class Collage)

Materials: 24" × 24" butcher paper; permanent ink marker; old magazines and newspapers; scissors; glue

Use a marker to divide the butcher paper into four or six sections. Label each section with a word that conveys a common emotion or feeling such as: happy, sad, surprised, excited, scared, or angry. At the top of the paper, add the caption *Everyone Has Feelings*.

Provide magazine and newspaper pages that have pictures of people's faces. Have children cut out each face, decide which emotion it shows, and then glue it in a section of the butcher paper that matches the emotion expressed in the picture.

* Traceable Me

Materials: white butcher paper; crayons or markers; full-length (preferable) or hand-held mirrors

Begin the activity by reviewing the different parts of the body. For example, ask children, “What body parts do we have on our faces? How many legs do we have?” Provide mirrors, so that children can study their own features. Discuss the individual features of each child. Then have children take turns lying on a large sheet of paper while you or another child draws around each child's body. Have children add their features to these body-shape drawings. Encourage them to color their drawings to reflect the clothes they are wearing. You may wish to do this activity over two days, since coloring an entire drawing in one day may be too fatiguing.

BLOCKS

During the first week of school, introduce the block area. Establish any rules concerning how much time children can spend in the block area, how many children can participate at one time, and safe and courteous conduct. Stress that the block area is a place for sharing, and explain that children need to resolve conflicts by talking.

Encourage children to manipulate the blocks and block buildings. You may want to suggest that children work together to build a block structure. Encourage children to talk to one another when they need blocks they cannot reach. Model naming the blocks by their shapes (cube, rectangular prism, cylinder, triangular prism, and so forth).

BULLETIN BOARD

* The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe

Draw a large, old-fashioned high-top shoe or a contemporary knee-high boot. To make windows for the shoe, cut out a small square of paper for each child in the class. Glue the top edge of each square to the shoe or boot drawing so that the paper forms a flap that may be raised. Glue a picture of each child behind each flap and print the child's name on the back of the flap. Have children open each window to discover who is behind it.

Recite the nursery rhyme "The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe." Then recite a new rhyme, like the one below, that is based on the original pattern.

*There was a nice teacher with children like you.
She/he had so many children who knew just what to do.
She/he smiled and laughed and nodded her head.
"Hello and good morning, dear children," she said.*

After reciting the new rhyme, open each flap and have everyone say "Good morning, (child's name)," as the photograph is revealed.



COOKING

* Fruit Salad

*Several different fruits, such as
bananas, apples, pineapple, and grapes
Round toothpicks
Plastic spoons and plastic serrated knives*

*Wax paper
Nondairy whipped topping
Paper cups
Cutting board*

Supply the fruit or have the children each bring in one piece. As you and the children wash your hands, explain why this is important before one prepares food. Discuss the names, shapes, sizes, and colors of the fruit. Cut each fruit into small pieces and insert a toothpick into each piece. Have children take turns closing their eyes and identifying the kind of fruit they are asked to smell. Then have children identify a fruit by tasting a piece. Discuss which fruits are easiest to detect by smell and which by taste.

Have children select a small amount of each fruit they like to eat. Allow them to work on wax paper and cut the fruit into smaller pieces, using the plastic knives. They can then mix their pieces in a cup with a small amount of whipped topping if desired.

As children eat, discuss how the class is like the fruit salad. Help children realize that just as different pieces of fruit work together to make a great salad, different children can work together as a great class, just as they do!

LANGUAGE ARTS

* Fingerplay – I Have Two Little Hands

I have two little hands.
 (Hold up both hands.)
They both belong to me.
 (Point to self.)
And they can help me do many things.
Watch me and you will see!
 (Hold out hands.)
They can pat me on the back.
 (Perform appropriate action for each line.)
They can pet a kitten.
They can wiggle high up in the air.
They can wear a mitten.
They can help me eat and work.
They help me have some fun.
Then I can fold them together
To rest when their job's done.
 (Quietly fold hands and place in lap.)

* Most Special Person Box

Put a small mirror inside a little box with a lid. Tell the children to take turns opening the box and looking inside to see who is “a most special person!”

* Our Initials Word Wall

Display the alphabet where children can clearly see it. This can serve as the beginning of a Word Wall (see p. xiv) that can be expanded all year to aid in literacy development.

Discuss names and help each child identify the letter with which his or her name begins. Write each name on a card to post under the appropriate letter in the Word Wall. Add the word *me* or the words *marvelous me* to the Word Wall. Add other words that children suggest.

* Marvelous Me Poem

Talk about similarities and differences among the children. Make a chart by dividing the chalkboard or a large piece of paper into five columns. Add these headings: *adjectives*, *I am*, *I like*, *I want*, and *favorite place*. Write each heading in a different color to visually guide the children as they use the chart.

adjectives	I am	I like	I want	favorite place
funny brave	a good friend	my new puppy	to go swimming	the zoo

With the children, brainstorm words and ideas about individual children and list them in each column, using the column's designated color. When the chart contains a substantial number of words and ideas, model how to write a *Marvelous Me* poem by using the template below and writing one about yourself. A completed example is also shown below. Then have each child compose an original poem and dictate it to you, or if children are writing, have them use the template to write a poem. Have younger or less-experienced writers complete one verse. Other children may complete two or more verses.

_____ *(adjective)* _____ *me,*
 _____ *(adjective)* _____ *me,*
I am _____ .
I like _____ .
I want _____ .
 _____ *is my favorite place to be,*
Marvelous, marvelous me.

Example:

Funny me,
Helpful me,
I am good at drawing pictures.
I like kids to ride bikes with me.
I want to learn to read.
The park is my favorite place to be,
Marvelous, marvelous me.

Children may be able to work more independently when writing or composing their own poem if you show them how to use markers to color code each line of the poem so that it matches the color of the appropriate column. This may help them to recall ideas and find spellings of needed words that fit each line.

To frame the finished poem, glue it to a piece of construction paper. You can use these poems to complete the Cut-Paper People activity described on page 4.

* Feelings

Read Judith Viorst's *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. Talk about feeling happy, sad, angry, or surprised. Help children know that everyone has these feelings sometimes.

* Look What I Can Do!

Duplicate the Look What I Can Do book pages (Activity Masters 4–6, pp. 281–283), and staple the pages together to make a book for each child. (Alternately, make booklets by dividing three sheets of $8\frac{1}{2}'' \times 11''$ paper in half, adding captions like those on Activity Masters 4–6, and duplicating the pages. Each caption should be a concept or skill you want to assess. Have the children fold the three pieces in half to make a $5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 8\frac{1}{2}''$ booklet.) On each page, have children write and draw their response to the caption.

The completed books can serve as a useful tool for assessing children's skills and knowledge of concepts at the beginning of the year. To document each child's growth, you may wish to have each child make another Look What I Can Do book later in the year. Date each book and have the children file them in their portfolios for comparison with the earlier books.