

O C T O B E R
N E W S L E T T E R

INVITATIONS FOR LEARNING

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Who Is This Field Trip Really For?

Learning goes from:

- Me to You
- Simple to Complex
- Concrete to Abstract
- Home to Neighborhood

Many field trips are the opposite of how learning takes place for preschool age children.

Perhaps the best age to take children on field trips is when the "outside" world becomes important to them. First and second graders love to explore the outside world and enjoy the visit.....

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I used to take my preschool program to the apple orchard every year in the Fall. Thinking it would help the children understand the process of making apple cider. We would all pile into the bus, took a ride that lasted about 35 minutes, crowded around a farmer who explained and demonstrated the process of making apple cider and finished by all drinking (actually spilling) a cup of cider and eating a donut. When we all arrived back at the preschool, parents/guardians were waiting to pick up their children. The children took one look at their parents and said, "But we haven't played yet!" One parent asked her child, "Did you have fun at the apple orchard?" The child said loudly, "They had a large dog that let us ride him." Nothing was said about the process of

making apple cider. It was at that point I thought, *Who was this trip really for?* The children really did not care about the process of apple cider making nor did they really want to go away from their fun, familiar place called preschool.

At this point, I started to really look at the goal of "field trips". What was the benefit and who was it for? I know that some people indicate that "field trips" expose children to a world they might not have an opportunity to see. Some agencies even require at least one "field trip" a month.

My experience working with preschool age children showed me that perhaps the best exposure is to bring the world to them by providing a real and authentic curriculum.

Bringing the "World" to Them

- *Provide different types of apples in all centers, (house area for cutting, washing); (block area for building with); (art area for painting with) etc.*
- *Provide golf tees and hammers for pounding into Pumpkins*
- *Provide wash tubs with water, soap and towels for washing apples and pumpkins*
- *Bring farmers into the classroom during snack time to enjoy apple cider and simple foods (no discussion of apple cider making) just simple real conversations.*
- *Rolling apples/pumpkins down slides and other inclines*
- *Set up a "Farmer's Market" in the drama area*

*Apply these concepts to all potential "field trip" examples.
Bring the world to their familiar setting.*