Pre-K Lesson Plan

"Bella Brown's Messier Than Messy Room" by J.W. Zarek

Overview

This lesson plan uses "Bella Brown's Messier Than Messy Room" to help Pre-K students develop organizational skills, counting abilities, sequencing understanding, and social-emotional growth. The story provides a relatable context for young children to learn about responsibility, organization, and the satisfaction of completing tasks.

Learning Objectives

- Students will practice counting from 1-10
- Students will sequence events in order
- Students will identify and sort different types of objects by texture and category
- Students will discuss feelings related to tasks and organization
- Students will practice following multi-step directions
- Students will connect organization with positive emotional outcomes

Materials Needed

- "Bella Brown's Messier Than Messy Room" book
- Various classroom items for sorting with different textures:
    - Soft items (stuffed animals, fabric scraps)
    - Hard items (blocks, toy cars)
    - Smooth items (paper, books)
    - Rough items (textured toys, craft materials)
- Four labeled bins with picture labels: "Clothes," "Toys," "Books," "Art Supplies"
- Chart paper and markers
- Cleaning checklist handout with simple pictures
- Removable picture cards showing Bella's cleaning steps
- Large visual timeline with velcro or magnetic attachments
- Art supplies for the extension activity

- Toy telephone for dramatic play
- Bluetooth speaker for clean-up music
- Camera for documentation

Vocabulary Focus

- Clean
- Messy
- Mountain (of clothes)
- Stack
- Organize
- Order
- Conquer
- Proud
- Accomplish

Pre-Reading Activities (20 minutes)

Sensory Exploration:

1. Place various textured materials in a "messy pile" at the center of the circle.
2. Invite children to explore the textures - soft fabric (like clothes), smooth cardboard (like game boxes), fuzzy items (like stuffed animals).
3. Ask: "How do these feel? Which ones remind you of things in your bedroom?"

Feelings Discussion with Visual Support:

1. Show emotion cards (happy, sad, frustrated, proud).
2. Ask: "How do you feel when your play area is very messy?"
3. "How do you feel when you can't find your favorite toy?"
4. "How do you feel when everything is in its place?"
5. Record responses on chart paper with pictures.

Movement Activity:

1. Teach a simple "Clean-Up Dance" with motions:
    - "Fold the clothes" (folding arms motion)
    - "Stack the games" (stacking hands)
    - "Hug the stuffed animals" (hugging motion)
    - "Make the bed" (sweeping arms across)
2. Practice the dance with music.

Reading the Book (15 minutes)

1. Show students the cover and read the title.
2. Take a "picture walk" through the book first, asking students to notice the details in Bella's messy room illustrations.
3. Ask students to predict what the story might be about.
4. Read the story expressively, encouraging students to:
    - Do the "Clean-Up Dance" motions when Bella cleans each area
    - Count along when Bella counts the stuffed animals
    - Make facial expressions showing how Bella might feel at different points
5. Pause at key moments to ask:
    - "What does Bella want to do instead of cleaning?" (Draw butterflies)
    - "Who helps Bella clean her room?" (Grandma Yetta)
    - "How does Bella feel when her room is messy?"
    - "How does Bella feel when her room is clean?"
6. Challenge students: "Let's look for Pip the Domovoi hiding in the pictures!" (mentioned in the back matter)

Post-Reading Activities (35 minutes)

Visual Sequencing Activity:

1. Display large images from the book showing:
    - Bella's messy room at the beginning
    - Folding clothes

    - Putting away stuffed animals
    - Stacking games
    - Making her bed
    - Clean room at the end
2. Mix up the pictures on a magnetic or velcro board.
3. Have students help put them in the correct order on a timeline.
4. Add emotion cards under each picture showing how Bella might feel at each step.
5. Count the steps together: "First, second, third, fourth, fifth."

Sensory-Based Dramatic Play:

1. Create a "messy corner" in the classroom with various textured items.
2. Set up a "bedroom" dramatic play area with:
    - Toy telephone for calling "Grandma"
    - Small clothes for folding
    - Stuffed animals
    - Empty game boxes
    - Small blanket for "making the bed"
3. Take photos of students in different stages of cleaning (for assessment).
4. Encourage students to use book language: "Clothes mountain conquered!" and "Well done! What's next?"
5. Play the "Clean-Up Dance" music during this activity.

Texture Sorting and Counting Activity:

1. Spread various classroom items on a large blanket.
2. Show students the labeled bins with picture labels.
3. Discuss how different items feel (soft, hard, smooth, rough).
4. Invite students to sort items by both texture and category.
5. Count items as they're placed in bins: "One soft teddy bear, two soft teddy bears..."

6. Take a "before" and "after" photo of the area.
7. Celebrate when each category is complete, just like Bella did.

Extension Activities

Feelings and Accomplishment Art:

1. Provide paper divided into two sections: "Before" and "After"
2. Ask children to draw:
    - How they feel when their space is messy (Before)
    - How they feel when their space is clean (After)
3. Take dictation about their feelings for each drawing.

Take-Home Visual Cleaning Helper Chart:

1. Send home a simple cleaning chart with pictures of tasks like:
    - Putting toys away
    - Putting clothes in hamper
    - Helping make bed
2. Include cut-out "butterfly reward" stickers to place on the chart when tasks are completed.
3. Encourage families to take "before" and "after" photos of their child's cleaning efforts.

Butterfly Connection Activity:

1. Discuss why cleaning her room helped Bella go to the butterfly garden (completing responsibilities leads to rewards).
2. Create butterfly art with various textures (tissue paper, fabric scraps, etc.).
3. Display butterflies around a clean classroom as a visual reminder of the reward for organization.

Classroom Implementation

Create a Bella Brown Cleaning Station:

1. Designate an area with cleaning supplies accessible to students.

2. Include a visual chart showing Bella's cleaning steps.
3. Create picture cards of classroom areas that need regular cleaning.
4. During daily cleanup time, students can select a card and clean that area.
5. Play the "Clean-Up Dance" music during cleanup time.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

1. Look at the "before" and "after" photos taken during activities.
2. Ask students: "How did Bella feel when her room was clean? How do you feel when you see our clean classroom?"
3. Create a classroom promise: "Like Bella Brown, we will keep our classroom clean by..." (add student ideas with pictures).
4. Sing the Bella Brown cleanup song together.

Assessment

- **Documentation:** Compare "before" and "after" photos of sorting activities
- **Observation:** Use a simple checklist to note each student's:
    - Counting accuracy (1-10)
    - Ability to identify at least three emotions related to the story
    - Participation in sequencing activities
    - Success in following multi-step directions
    - Use of vocabulary from the story
- **Student Work:** Collect the "Before/After" feelings artwork
- **Dictation:** Record student responses about how organization makes them feel

Modifications for Different Learners

- **For students who need more support:**
    - Provide hand-over-hand guidance for sorting activities
    - Use fewer items and steps
    - Create personal visual schedules for cleanup tasks
    - Pair with a peer helper

- **For advanced students:**
    - Increase counting beyond 10
    - Ask them to create their own cleanup plan with drawings
    - Have them "read" the story to a stuffed animal using the pictures
    - Create a map of Bella's room before and after cleaning

State Standards Alignment

This lesson addresses common Pre-K standards including:

- Counting objects up to 10
- Sequencing events (first, next, last)
- Sorting and classifying objects by multiple attributes
- Following multi-step directions
- Identifying and expressing feelings
- Developing independence and self-help skills
- Making connections between actions and consequences

Home-School Connection

- Share photos of classroom activities on class communication platform
- Send home a simple version of the "Clean-Up Dance" for families to try
- Create a "Bella's Cleaning Tips" newsletter with student ideas
- Invite families to share their own cleanup strategies

Additional Resources

- Classroom poster of cleanup steps with pictures and textures
- "Bella Brown's Clean-Up Song" (to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It"):
    - "We can clean up like Bella Brown, fold the clothes! (folding motion)
    - We can clean up like Bella Brown, stack the games! (stacking motion)
    - We can clean up, we feel proud, we can do it, say it loud!
    - We can clean up like Bella Brown, clean our room!"

- Visual emotional check-in chart: "How does our clean classroom make you feel?"

Teacher Reflection Questions

After implementing the lesson, consider:

1. Which sensory elements engaged students most effectively?
2. How did students connect organization to emotional well-being?
3. Which vocabulary words did students incorporate into their everyday language?
4. How might this lesson extend to other areas of classroom organization?