Preschool Plan It’s Teacher Club Presents:

A Spider Theme!

From Miss Cheryl at Preschool Plan It

They are creepy and strange and capture the attention of your entire classroom when one is seen! Let’s learn about spiders!

Some spider facts:

- Spiders are not insects. They are arachnids.
- They have 8 legs.
- Most spiders also have 8 eyes!
- All spiders have fangs.
- All spiders spin silk.
- Most spiders are harmless.
- In the U.S. there are 6 that are harmful: The Brown Recluse, The Sac Spider and 4 different types of Widow Spiders.

On the following pages you’ll find:

- Themed Activities for Your Interest Learning Centers
- Spider Color Match file folder game
- Spider/Fly/Web (abc pattern) Calendar Pieces
- Pumpkin Playdough Recipe (for group & individual portions!
- Playdough Mat #1: Welcome To My Web!
- Playdough Mat #2: Spider Counting
- Itsy Bitsy Spider Song Poster & Song Card
Let the Spider Theme Planning Begin!

My Sticky Web

Materials needed: white yarn, scissors, black construction paper, liquid starch (or watered down glue) and wipes.

- Have the children cut pieces of white yarn into varying lengths.
- The children then dip the yarn into the starch or glue and squeeze the excess off by pinching the yarn with their index finger and thumb and sliding them down the yarn (an adult may need to help with this).
- The children create their own spider web on the black paper.
- Add a plastic spider to it while it is wet!
- Have each child print their name, as best they can, on the front of the paper with a white crayon or white chalk.

Spider Painting

Materials needed: dowel rods, yarn, plastic spiders, shallow tray with paint, paper.

In advance:
- Tie yarn to dowel rods (I’ve used paint brushes when I did not have the rods!).
- Tie a plastic spider to the hanging end of the yarn.
- Fill shallow trays with different colors of paint.
- Cover art table with large sheet of paper (or tape a large piece of paper on the floor instead!)

The children hold the dowel rod or paint brush and lower their spiders into a tray of paint. They then move the spider up and down onto the paper (like they are fishing).

Marble Paint Webs

Materials needed: shallow trays or box covers, black construction paper, white paint (thinned out a little), pipettes (or plastic spoons), several marbles for each child to use.

- The children place a piece of black paper in the tray.
- They use the pipette or spoon to drizzle white paint on a few areas of the paper.
- They drop 2-3 marbles in the tray.
- Holding the tray on the sides, they tilt and shake (left to right and right to left) the tray to make the marbles move around and create a web.
Create a Spider

Materials needed: egg carton cups (cut out each individual egg section from the trays and print each child’s name inside a section), colored pipe cleaners, paint, brushes, googly eyes, glue

- The children poke the pipe cleaners into the sides of the cups. Remind them that a spider has 8 legs. Have them count out 8 pieces of pipe cleaner themselves.
- The children paint the spider any colors they want.
- The children glue on googly eyes (remember, most spiders have 8 eyes!)

Hello Little Spider! Hello Little Fly!

Materials needed: paper, washable stamp pads, and markers

- The children make thumb and fingerprints onto paper.
- They use the markers to create spiders and flies: They can draw 8 legs & eyes; draw wings and eyes, etc.

Blocks

Hiding Homes

Provide different types of plastic spiders. Encourage the children to use the blocks to create places where spiders can hide and spin their webs.
Circle Time is such a great time for children to learn the social skills of being together as a large group AND to learn more about your Back to School Preschool Activities theme!

What IS That?

Materials needed: A box or bag that children cannot see into and a plastic spider!

- Place the spider in the box or bag.
- Have each child place their hand in and feel the item.
- Ask them to describe what they feel (soft, hard, fuzzy, etc.) and guess what it is. I suggest having them whisper to you what their guess is as other children may just copy what the last child said.
- List their guesses on a chart paper.
- When all the children have had a turn, name their guesses out loud.
- Then, reveal (with great drama!) what is in the bag or box!

Let’s Talk Spiders!

- Bring a ball of yarn to circle.
- Hang a large piece of chart paper at your circle area.
- Tell the children you are going to talk about spiders today. Whoever has the ball of yarn in their hand tells one thing they either know about spiders, want to know about spiders or even what they think about spiders.
- This is a little complicated for preschoolers so rather than expect them to hold onto the yarn after their turn to make a web, have another adult come around with a piece of masking tape and tape the yarn down.

You start:
I think spiders are scary. (then you toss the ball of yarn to a child and tape your piece of yarn in front of you on the floor. The other adult prints your spider thought on the chart paper. The child who has the yarn says something about spiders. Again, the other adult prints their response on the chart paper and then you tape the yarn on the floor and the child tosses the ball to another child. When you are done, you will have a cool web taped to the floor.

Extension. When done, let the children try to walk on the spider web they just made and “balance” on the yarn lines of the web!
Little Miss Muffet

Teach the children this rhyme:
Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet
Eating her curds and whey.
Along came a spider
That sat down beside her.
And frightened Miss Muffet away!

Talk about each sentence: What is a tuffet? What are curds and whey? (It is like cottage cheese, which will be an activity in this theme as well!). Why was she frightened?

Extension: Act it out! Give a child a bowl and spoon, a pillow or chair to sit on. One child is Miss or Mr. Muffet and the other is the spider. Let pairs of children take turns acting it out until everyone has had a turn. They LOVE the running away part!

Variation: Create flannel pieces of this story to use while teaching it. After Circle Time, place it in your Library area.

Itsy, Bitsy Spider

Of course! Teach the children this song and the hand motions. When they are familiar with it, sing it again using a deep voice for the “big, huge spider” and a soft voice for the “teensy weensy spider” etc.

The itsy, bitsy spider when up the water spout.
Down came the rain and washed the spider out.
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain.
Then the itsy, bitsy spider when up the spout again!

Spider Partners Dance

In advance, create pairs of spiders. Make them different colors and patterns.

Pass out one spider to each child. (2 children will have the same color/pattern).
Have each child describe their spider to you (the colors, patterns, it has dots or it has lines, etc.)
Have each child find their matching friend.

Extension: Play music and have them dance. When the music stops, they run over and stand with the child who has the same spider.
Collect the spiders and pass them out again and repeat!
Cooking with children helps develop their math skills and helps them to learn how to follow directions. It also allows for some great conversation!

Ask many questions while cooking with your children to encourage conversation! Be sure to ask specific themed questions while making these fun snacks!

**Spider Biscuits**

Materials needed: refrigerated dough, raisins, and mini-pretzels

I use Pillsbury biscuit dough. Cook enough for each child to have one. When cooked, have the children create a spider by adding raisin eyes and 8 legs!

**String Cheese Webs**

Materials needed: String cheese for each child!
Have you ever noticed that if you peel string cheese, it is kind of like spider webs?!

Have the children try and peel thin pieces of the string cheese of to see this! Have them place them on a paper plate to create a spider web before they eat it!

**Juice-Y! Yum!**

Materials needed: sandwich sized zip lock baggies (they MUST be the zippered type of bags); oranges, an orange juicer, straws.

Spiders do not eat bugs and insects. They actually drink the fluids. Make your own spider nectar! :)

Have the children print their name (with a marker) onto a baggie. Have them take turns juicing oranges. Have the pour some juice into their baggie. Have them zip the baggie closed (be sure to double check when they are done that it is zipped). Poke a straw into their baggies below the zippered part for them. Drink up!
Drama

Spider Babies

Set up a large sheet in your dramatic play area. This will be the spider sac. The children can pretend to be the spider babies coming out of the sac. Be sure to add books about spiders and pretend spiders for them to use.

The Farm

Create a farm in your dramatic play area. In the Very Busy Spider (the book by Eric Carle), many of the farm animals invite the spider to play. But the spider is too busy! This is a great follow up idea to that book. Provide a farmers hat, boots, overalls, etc. Or provide animal masks for the children to pretend to be animals.

Easel

Spider Splats

Provide squish balls (you know, those plastic, rubber squishy balls with rubber tips hanging from them?!) for the children to paint with. They are pretty cool to paint with and make spider web-like designs!

Gross Motor

Follow The Web

In advance, create a spider web shape (a LARGE one) on the floor by taping yarn on the floor. Have the children work on their spatial discrimination skills: Walk ON the web lines. Walk IN the web lines. Hop OVER the web lines.
Obstacle Course

Materials needed: pieces of furniture and yarn
Criss-cross the yarn around and through furniture throughout your space.
Have the children crawl over, under and through the course like a spider!

Spin That Spider!

Materials needed: Plastic Spiders, yarn, Silly String

I know! Yes, it is going to get crazy!

Hang spiders from an outside fence or, if doing this inside, on the floor.
Assist each child in taking a turn to spray the silly string onto a spider!

Ask parents to donate some of this Silly String!

Our Web

Give the children blue painters tape. Have them tear large pieces and place it on the floor to create their own web! They can then walk on the lines, hope in it, dance in it. Provide bean bags for them to try and toss onto the web without hitting one of the lines.

VARIATION: If outside, give them sidewalk chalk to draw lots of webs!

Anansi the Spider by Gerald McDermott
How Do Spiders Make Webs? by Melissa Stewart
I Know An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Nadine Bernard Westcott
Itsy Bitsy Spider by Iza Tripani
The Really Hairy Scary Spider by Theresa Greenaway
The Roly-Poly Spider by Jill Sardegna
Spider Watching by Vivian French
Spiders by Gail Gibbons
The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle
I Know An Old Lady..

I LOVE this book! Make copies of the characters from the book (or draw your own). Make 2 of each character. Glue onto tag board or index cards and laminate. The children play a matching game with it.

VARIATION: Give the children just one set of the cards. Have them put them in order as they recall the story/song. The children can match them up or you can use it as a memory or concentration type game!

Trace a Web

In advance, draw spider webs on colored construction paper. Have the children use glue bottles to try and cover the lines of the webs. This is GREAT hand muscle development practice! When done, they can glue a paper spider on their web!

VARIATION: Give the children Q-Tips (cotton swabs) and small trays of glue to dip the swabs into and then trace the webs.

Spider Lacing

Create spiders out of tag board. Hole punch the edges and have the children practice lacing.

VARIATION: Rather than punch holes in spider shapes, take pieces of tag board and cut slits around the edges. The children than criss-cross the yarn around the tag board.

Surprise Spinning

Provide yarn and different plastic spiders, flies, bugs and even small classroom toys.

Show the children how to wrap the items with yarn until the entire toy is covered and you can’t see it anymore. Place the wrapped items in a box.

The next day, place the wrapped items out. Have each child choose one and guess what is in it. They then unwrap it to see what is inside!

EXTENSION: When they guess, ask them why they think that—is it small, large, a square shape, etc.
Spider Counting

In advance, draw webs on 10 pieces of paper. Print a number (1-10) on each one. If you want, draw the corresponding number of dots on the paper as well. Laminate.

Provide a large bowl of plastic spiders.

The children place the corresponding number of spiders on each web.

VARIATION: Rather than using plastic spiders, have the children roll playdough into balls and place them onto the dots!

Music & Move

Arachnid Dancing

Choose a CD that has many different tempos of music.

When you play the music, the children dance or move to that tempo/beat like a spider. When you stop the music, they stop until the music plays again.

VARIATION: Encourage the children to act out specific spider moves each time. Such as climb the water spout to the beat! Skim across the water to the beat! Spin a web to the beat!

I Know An Old Lady..

I LOVE this book still! Can you tell! Try singing this song and pausing while the children act out each part! It is hilarious fun!

Sand & Water

Down The Water Spout

Add water, water wheels and plastic spiders to your sensory table!
**Hide & Seek Spiders & Flies**

Add sand to your sensory table.
In advance, tie yarn to plastic spiders and flies.
Provide spoons and craft sticks.
The children can dig in the sand and hid the spiders and flies and cover them again using the spoons. They should leave the string on top of the sand.
Once they are all buried, they try and guess what is hiding, a spider or a fly, and then pull the string (I recommend having the children wear safety goggles to avoid flying sand in the eyes).

You can also provide craft sticks and have the children stick them in the sand and then wrap the yarn around the sticks for webs. They then can try balancing the spiders on the webs!

**Curds & Whey**

Little Miss Muffet was eating her curds and whey…what is that anyway?

Well, it is cottage cheese! Here are some cottage cheese ideas!

Provide different flavors (there are so many to choose from: strawberry, pineapple, etc.) and do a taste test.

Make your own! Yup, you can! I’ve done this and it’s pretty cool!

You’ll need milk and vinegar!

Heat up about 4 cups of milk.
Once it comes to a slight boil (stir constantly so it does not burn), take it off the heat.
Add about ¼ cup of white vinegar and stir.
Now, pour it into a strainer.
The liquid that comes out is the whey.
The curd is what is left—cottage cheese!
You can add fruit or a pinch of salt and eat it. See if your kids will try their own, homemade curds!

(The vinegar actually separated the proteins in the milk!)
A Closer Look…

Find a spider outside (or get one from a pet store!).
Place it in a glass jar with holes poked in the top for air (but not big enough for it to get out!).
Place some twigs and a leaf in the jar with the spider.
Give the children magnifying glasses to observe the spider.
Set it free at the end of the day.

EXTENSION: Provide paper and markers for the children to draw their observations.

Life Cycle of a Spider

Provide spider life cycle cards and a poster with the cycle on it. The children can place the cards in order.

The stages are:

Observations

If you have deceased bugs from outside or in those dusty corners of a basement, put them in jars for the children to observe!

Another way to do this is to get a microscope with slides of bugs from a Teacher Store!

Water Spiders

Water spiders are pretty cool! They spin webs ON the water and then use air bubbles to put underneath it. They can then come up from under the web to breathe!

Surface tension would be a great activity to go along with talking about water spiders!

In a bowl, place some water. Have the children help drop toothpicks on the water. Observe them. They just kind of float around there.
Now, put some dish soap on a Q-Tip (cotton swab) or just drop some in the middle of the bowl. It makes the toothpicks “swim” away!

Spider Sac

Discuss the egg sac to the children and how it protects the baby spiders inside.
Now, have the children help you tear or cut strips of newspaper.
Have them paint an inflated balloon with slightly watered down glue.
Then have them wrap (spin) the paper on the outside of the balloon. Cover the balloon.
Let it dry. Then pop the balloon.

The special part……choose a dark colored balloon. Don’t let the children know that you have filled the balloon with small, plastic spiders before you blew it up!

Once you pop the balloon in front of the children, they will see all the spiderlings!
A Pet SPIDER?

Ask the children to draw a spider on a paper. This is their pet spider! What would it look like? Big? Small? What color(s) would it be? How many legs do spiders have? How many eyes? Where would their pet spider live? What would they name it? What does their pet spider like to do for fun?

Write down the answers and any other information they give you. This is great practice for their pre-writing skills as they hold colored pencils and draw circles, lines, etc. to create their pet spider.

And of course, encourage them to print their name on the paper as best they can!

More Practice!

When children practice using pens and pencils, they are learning how to hold the items, of course, but also practicing the motor control.

In advance, create papers with circles, zig-zag lines, etc. Laminate them. Provide children with thin, low odor, dry erase markers. Encourage them to trace the circles and lines on the paper. Erase and do again as often as they want!

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Spider Color Match

Instructions:
Children place each spider on its corresponding web.

How to make the file folder game:
- Print out all pages.
- Cut out page title and the instructions.
- Glue title onto tab of file folder & instructions on the front.
- Cut out spider web boxes and the spiders. Laminate them.
- Glue the spider webs into a file folder.
Print and laminate all of these pieces. Use a dry erase marker to print the month on the card below (after you have laminated it). You can then erase and use again any month you’d like!
Calendar Pieces Spider Theme ABC Pattern

7  8  9

10  11  12

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Calendar Pieces Spider Theme ABC Pattern

19  20  21

22  23  24

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## Pumpkin Play Dough

**For each child to make their own!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 cups flour</td>
<td>1 cup salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups hot water</td>
<td>2 tablespoons oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange paint</td>
<td>1 tsp all spice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Mix the hot water, oil and paint together in advance.
2. Child adds ¼ cup of flour, 1/8 cup salt and a dash of all spice to their cup.
3. Child adds ¼ cup of the water/oil/paint mixture to the cup.
4. They stir until mixed.
5. Add more flour until it is the correct consistency.

The children could add about a ½ tsp of pumpkin to their cup. Just remember that it would need to be thrown away at the end of the day or the pumpkin will go bad! The children typically want to take play dough home when they have made their own batch, so for individual play dough making, I don’t add the real pumpkin. Trust me, your parents will be glad you did not!

**Recipe makes enough for 8 children.**
Pumpkin Play Dough

To make as a group!

4 cups flour
2 cups hot water
Orange paint
1 cup salt
2 tablespoons oil
1 tsp all spice

1. Include children in the cooking by letting each child put 2 ingredients in. For example, there are 7 ingredients. If you have 12 children, have several children put in ¼ cup of flour each and you put in the rest.
2. Mix 2 cups of the flour and all of the salt and all spice together.
3. In separate bowl, mix hot water and oil together (adult’s job!)
4. Add a squirt of orange paint to the water and oil and mix.
5. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients.
6. Have the children take turns stirring until combined.
7. Add more flour, ¼ cup at a time, until the play dough is the correct consistency.

You could add a few tablespoons of pumpkin to this recipe as well. Just remember to throw it away at the end of the day or the pumpkin will go bad!

Recipe makes enough for 8 children.

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Playdough Mat 1: Welcome to My Web!

Ideas for use:

Cover the Web!

Children use their muscles to make “snakes” with their playdough and then line them up ON the spider web lines.  
(Skills: muscle development; fine motor control; eye-hand coordination)

Make spiders!

Children roll playdough pieces into balls and place on the web to be their spiders. They can add legs and eyes as well! They can “squish” the spiders as they count them.  
(Skills: muscle development; fine motor control; rational counting)

Small Group Work:

Present math activities to the children to complete:
Add 3 spiders to the web.
Place 2 blue spiders on the top.
Place 4 green spiders on the bottom.
Create more based on the concepts you are working on with your students.
Playdough Mat 2: Spider Counting!

Counting and adding legs to the spider! Numbers 1-10

- Children use their muscles to make “snakes” with their playdough.

- They add the number of legs to the spider that are listed on each card.

- The numeral is listed for recognition.

- The corresponding number of dots is pictured for rational counting.

(Skills: muscle development; fine motor control; eye-hand coordination, rational counting, number recognition)
How to use:

• Print and laminate the song card below (it is 5” X 3”).
• Place in a can or box with other cards of songs your children love!
• In transitional times (waiting to go outside or wash hands, etc.), pull out your song box or song can (I use a decorated coffee can!).
• Shuffle the cards in your hands saying “Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle” and your children yell “STOP”!
• When they yell stop, whichever card is on top is the one you sing! The kids LOVE this!

Each month you’ll receive one of these cards that correspond with the song poster for the month to add to your Song Card Collection!

On the next page, you’ll find the Song Poster! Print and laminate for use over the years!
The itsy, bitsy spider
Climbed up the water spout

Down came the rain
And washed the spider out

Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain.

And the itsy, bitsy spider
Climbed up the spout again!
Thank you so much for being a member of the

PRESCHOOL PLAN IT TEACHER CLUB!

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