



Case Study: Pre-Kindergarten Baby Project

Phase 1: Getting Started

The children in the Pre-K class were talking about babies. They had a few students who had younger siblings as well as students that had siblings about to arrive. A good number of the children were bringing it up and seem interested in discussing it. To make sure it was a viable study, they thought about:

1. **Interesting to Majority of Students:** Would the study be interesting to most students? Was it something most could relate to? *They answered yes to this. We've all been babies! And there seemed to be some energy around this topic.*
2. **Curriculum Subjects:** Could this study cover several curricular areas? Could they bring in reading, writing, math...? *They decided it did, such as math, writing, reading, art, movement and science.*
3. **Entrance Points:** Are there ways that all children can be brought in, covering several interest points? *Yes! Children who had an interest in blocks could build various types of baby furniture such as cribs, high chairs and play pens. Students who enjoyed art, could create baby collages and make rattles. Students that liked math could count fingers and toes, help with measurement, weighing and charting. Students who had an interest in cooking could make their own baby food. Those who enjoyed movement activities would like a crawling obstacle course.*
4. **Opportunities for Observation & Investigation:** Are there ways that children could directly observe and investigate parts of the study through local resources? There are opportunities for observation and direct contact with babies? *Yes! Babies could be brought in by families. Families could also bring in baby supplies and books that would provide additional opportunities for observation. Additionally the children could visit the baby ward at the local hospital.*
5. **Parent Involvement:** Could parents and families be involved? *Definitely. Parents, who had recently had a baby, ones expecting a baby and younger siblings of current classmates could come in for either an observation or an interview. There are a few adopted children in the classroom and those parents could come in to talk about adoption.*
6. **Basic Skills and Goals:** Which basic skills could be acquired? Could this study help students meet the Common Core Guidelines for Pre-kindergarten? *Yes! New vocabulary could be introduced. They could have reason to try writing stories of their experiences. They could listen to books and stories. The children would be asked to count and chart a variety of objects so they could work on counting to 20 and writing numbers 0-5 as well as the early skills of bigger/smaller, shapes and sorting. There would be opportunities for fine and gross motor skill building. There would be sensory activities. They could also be asked to do experiments relating to science, where they would have to question and observe.*

Next they filled out the "Inquiry Planning sheet" and made an Anticipatory Web of all the directions it could go in. It was determined that this would be a viable study!

The teachers then sent out an email to the families announcing the new study, urging them to discuss at home with their children and asking them to bring in pictures of their kids with a short blurb about them as babies. They

were also asked to bring in diapers, baby toys, bottles, etc. Finally, they were asked if they could bring in their babies to be measured, observed, drawn, etc.

They told the class that they were going to begin a Baby Study and spoke about themselves as babies and showed their baby pictures to the class. They discussed memories of themselves and stories that their parents have told them to begin building excitement. The teachers took out the baby pictures from the class and played a guessing game with the baby pictures to see if the other students could recognize their peers as babies. The students then wrote/drew stories of themselves as babies or other babies that they knew.

The teachers then asked the children what they knew about babies and they made a web. This demonstrated their preexisting knowledge and related experiences. Some responses included babies have special tubs, babies play with things, babies crawl, babies cannot play with small toys, babies eat baby food, babies use teething rings and babies wear diapers.

Finally, they asked the children if they want to learn anything about babies and they made a Wonderings Chart. Some of these included: why do babies cry, why do babies eat baby food, why do they use teething rings, when do they learn to crawl and walk, how do you adopt a baby, how do they take baths, why do they wear diapers, how can they eat. Then they talked about where they might find the answers to their questions. Teachers made a list of their predictions (books, real babies, baby doctors, baby store).

Phase 2: Collecting Information about the Topic

1. Literacy: The teachers read books about babies (fiction and nonfiction) in order to create additional background knowledge. They sang songs about babies and made up rhymes. They wrote and drew their own baby stories.

2. Visitors: Babies came into the classroom and the families talked to them about eating, developmental milestones and the kids weighed them. They also measured with yarn or other materials. They observed how a parent demonstrated putting a baby in a carrier. They did observational drawings. Students also drew baby toys from viewing other baby toys. A parent who had adopted one of the students and another parent who was expecting a baby came in to talk about preparing for a new baby. Students measured her stomach. They talk about similarities and differences between preparing for an adopted baby and a baby from mommy's belly.

3. Trips: Children take a trip to the baby ward of the local hospital. They asked the baby nurse questions and do observational drawings of babies and the nursery. They walked around the neighborhood and observed babies they saw.

4. Cooking: The children had a baby food taste test and compared store bought baby food with homemade baby food. Another time the children tasted formula and compared it with regular milk. They made a Venn diagram describing the two.

5. Obstacle course: Students learned how babies get around and practiced crawling through an obstacle course.

6. Sign Language: Students learned the various ways that babies communicate and learned some sign language to communicate through a read aloud and a video. It was discussed why babies learn sign language.

7. Building Toys and Furniture: They talked about the various toys babies play with. They looked through books to find additional toys and made a chart. They made baby mobiles, rattles and shakers. They also made a crib and a high chair in woodshop.

8. Baby play: They washed, weighed and diapered baby dolls, practiced feeding them with bottles and spoons, practiced putting on a baby carrier and building various types of baby furniture in the block area. The children created rattles, mobiles and collages using baby magazines.

Phase 3: Concluding the Project

The children looked at their wonderings chart and discussed if/how they have answered their questions. The

teacher helped them to compare what they learned with what they knew before. They talked about how they wanted to show parents and peers what they did and what they found out to those who were not there. They decide to create a baby book and watch a film about babies. They set up an interview station where kids stopped in to talk about different things they learned. In the end they created two baby books: individual ones and a class book. The first book was made using a short take-home assignment asking parents to discuss and share with their child their favorite food, toy and activity when they were a baby. Students were asked to illustrate the page as well. The second book was made after asking the children what they learned and revisiting the wonderings. Photos, illustrations and quotes from the study were compiled to make this class book. Lastly, students decided and voted that the last thing they wanted to do was watch a film about babies. Teachers found a Sesame Street video all about babies. Teachers met and reflected on what went well, what didn't go so well and what was unexpected. For example, they wound up talking about baby animals a bunch, which was unforeseen.

PICTURES:



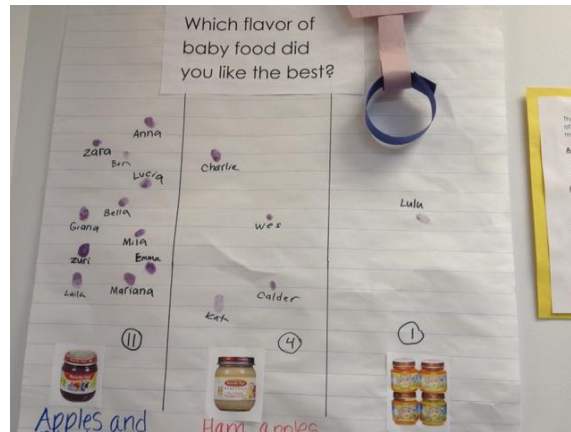
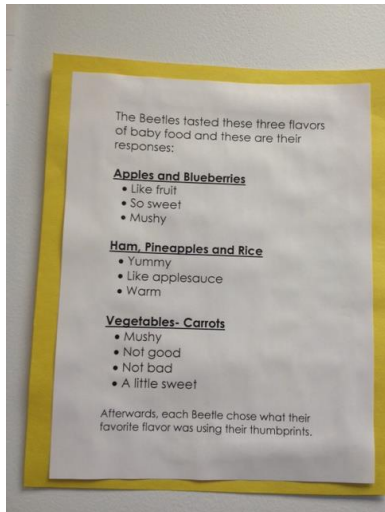
Sharing their baby memories



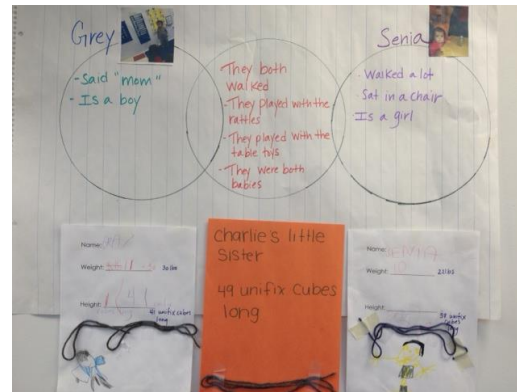
Baby pictures!



Baby toy observational drawings



Baby food taste test results



Baby milk vs cow's milk taste test

Measuring a student's sister with unifix cubes & string

PLANNING SHEET:

STAGE 1 – DESIRED RESULTS	
Unit Title: Babies and Growing	
Established Goals: Babies are members of some families with certain needs. We once were babies and babies change over time.	
<p>Understandings: <i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies need help to do things (eating, walking, getting dressed) • Babies eat different food than we do • Babies play different games • Babies wear diapers 	<p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do babies get around? How do babies eat and drink? How do babies communicate? What do babies eat and why? How do babies learn?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies use different tools for drinking and eating (bottle, spoons) • Sit in different chairs and sleep in cribs • Everyone starts off as a baby • Babies height and weight change at different ages • Babies reach developmental milestones • Some babies are adopted 	<p>How do you take care of babies?</p> <p>What do babies need help to do and who are the people that help them?</p>
<p>Students will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How babies eat/drink • What toys are appropriate for babies • How babies learn • Who takes care of babies • That babies are different • Babies grow and change • Some babies are adopted 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to feed a baby • Decided and determine which toys are appropriate for babies • Understand how babies learn to eat, walk etc. • Understand that someone takes care of a baby and teaches him/her how to do things • Understand that babies need special gear • Understand how babies communicate • Understand that babies grow into children • Understand that babies can come from mommies' bellies or other mommies' bellies

STAGE 2 – ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE	
<p>Performance Tasks:</p> <p>Creating and tasting baby food, formula, milk</p> <p>Measuring and Weighing babies</p> <p>Creating baby toys, cribs, changing tables</p> <p>Properly holding a baby</p> <p>Giving babies a bath</p> <p>Brainstorming ways to communicate with babies</p>	<p>Other Evidence:</p> <p>Teacher's observational notes</p> <p>Photographs</p> <p>Revisit charts and webs created initially</p> <p>Organize charts and webs</p> <p>List of wonderings</p> <p>Field sketches</p>

Sharing and reflecting on own experiences	Create a class book of what we did as babies Visiting baby stores for a scavenger hunt Visiting baby ward
Key Criteria: Children asking meaningful questions on the topic to further their learning Children working collaboratively as well as independently Children using a variety of materials creatively Children asking questions using evidence, predictions and analysis of information Children participating in class and partner discussion on the topic	

ANTICIPATORY WEB:

