

Walker Homeschool Academy: Camping Adventure Day!

Materials Needed

- Blankets, pillows, and chairs (for building a fort)
- Flashlight
- Backpack
- Paper bag or small bucket (for scavenger hunt)
- Various "trail mix" ingredients (e.g., small crackers, raisins, chocolate chips, cereal O's, pretzels)
- Small bowls for sorting
- Red, orange, and yellow tissue paper or construction paper
- An empty paper towel roll
- Black or dark blue construction paper
- Star stickers or a white/yellow crayon/chalk
- A favorite picture book about camping or forest animals (e.g., "We're Going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen or "A Camping Spree with Mr. Magee" by Chris Van Dusen)
- Optional: Binoculars, magnifying glass

Subject Focus: Science, Math, Language Arts, Gross Motor Skills, Art

Grade Level: Pre-K / Kindergarten (Age 5)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Walker will be able to:

- Construct a simple shelter (fort) using available materials.
- Identify and collect 3-5 different natural objects (or household items representing them).
- Sort and count groups of objects up to 10.
- Contribute to a collaborative story by adding a character or event.
- Create a piece of art representing the night sky.

Lesson Activities & Procedure

1. Gearing Up & Campsite Construction (15-20 minutes)

Focus: Gross Motor Skills & Engineering

- **Introduction:** Announce, "Welcome, Camper Walker! Today, we're going on a special camping adventure right here at home. Every camper needs a good tent. Our first mission is to build the best campsite ever!"
- **Activity:** Guide Walker in using chairs, blankets, and pillows to create an indoor "tent" or fort. Encourage him to problem-solve how to make the roof stay up and create an entrance. This is his base camp for the day!
- **Teacher's Role:** Act as the assistant builder, offering help but letting Walker lead the design. Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen if we put this heavy blanket on top?" or "How can we make a door?"

2. Nature Scavenger Hunt (15 minutes)

Focus: Science & Observation

- **Introduction:** "Great job building our camp! Now, let's explore the wilderness. We need to find some interesting things for our nature collection." Hand Walker his backpack containing a paper bag or bucket for collecting treasures.
- **Activity:** Go on a scavenger hunt in the backyard or a nearby park. If indoors, hide these items around the house. The list can include:
 - Find something smooth (a rock).
 - Find something rough (tree bark or a pinecone).
 - Find something green (a leaf).
 - Find something that makes a crunching sound when you step on it.
 - Find a home for a tiny creature (an old log, a hole in the ground, a shell).
- **Teacher's Role:** Use the magnifying glass to inspect items up close. Talk about the textures, colors, and potential purpose of each found object.

3. Trail Mix Math (10 minutes)

Focus: Math & Fine Motor Skills

- **Introduction:** "All that exploring has made me hungry! Let's make a special, high-energy snack that campers love: trail mix."
- **Activity:** Set out the small bowls with different ingredients. Ask Walker to do some "snack math." For example:
 - "Count out 10 cereal O's for our mix."
 - "Add 5 chocolate chips."
 - "Can you find 8 raisins?"
 - "Let's sort the pretzels and crackers into two different piles."
 Once counted and sorted, he can mix all the ingredients in his bag or a larger bowl. This will be the snack for story time.
- **Teacher's Role:** Guide the counting and sorting, helping Walker with one-to-one correspondence (touching each item as he counts it).

4. Campfire Stories & Constellation Art (15-20 minutes)

Focus: Language Arts & Creativity

- **Introduction:** "The sun is going down on our campsite. Let's build a safe campfire so we can tell stories."
- **Activity - Part 1 (Campfire):** Work with Walker to arrange the red, yellow, and orange paper into a fire shape. Place the flashlight in the center of the paper towel roll and stand it up inside the "fire" to make it glow. Turn down the lights for effect.
- **Activity - Part 2 (Story):** Sit around the campfire and begin reading a camping-themed book or start a story: "Once upon a time, deep in the woods, a brave explorer named Walker saw something rustling in the bushes. It was a...". Let Walker fill in the blank and add to the story.
- **Activity - Part 3 (Art):** After the story, say, "Let's look at the stars!" Give Walker the black paper and star stickers (or white crayon). He can create his own constellations. Ask him to name his creations (e.g., "The Great Race Car," "The Dinosaur Star").

Assessment (Informal & Observational)

Observe and chat with Walker throughout the day to check for understanding:

- **Shelter:** Ask Walker, "Can you show me the strongest part of your fort? How did you build it?"
- **Scavenger Hunt:** At the end of the hunt, ask, "Can you show me the smooth rock? Which

item was your favorite to find?"

- **Math:** Watch as he counts the trail mix items. Does he touch each one? Can he make distinct groups?
- **Story & Art:** Listen to his story contributions. Does he engage with the prompt? Ask him to tell you about the constellations he made.

Differentiation & Extension

- **For Extra Support:** Pre-draw dots on the black paper for him to connect into constellations. Give him a checklist with pictures for the scavenger hunt. Count trail mix items together, hand over hand.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Ask Walker to draw a map of the scavenger hunt route. Challenge him to create a pattern with his trail mix ingredients (e.g., cracker, raisin, cracker, raisin). Encourage him to tell a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end.

Lesson Closure: Packing Up Camp (5 minutes)

Gather inside the fort one last time to enjoy the trail mix snack. Talk about the day's adventure. Ask questions like:

- "What was your favorite part of our camping trip?"
- "What is one thing you learned about nature today?"
- "If we went on a real camping trip, what is one thing you would want to bring?"

End the lesson by "putting out the campfire" and packing away the materials, just like a real camper who leaves no trace.