



December Theme Reflections



In *Apple and the Copycat*, Apple doesn't know that the other apple she sees is a reflection of herself in a mirror. She then has lots of fun discovering what a mirror can show you. These activities introduce children to the concept of reflections.

Try the activities below or some of your own.

Activity One: Where can I find my face?

This activity helps children to think about all the different surfaces which reflect images.

Gather a selection of different reflective items - for example:

- mirror
- foil
- kettle or toaster
- spoon
- metal saucepan

Don't show these items to the children at first.

Ask the children to think of places where they have been able to see their own face and see which items they come up with.

Let the children investigate their own reflection in the different items and see how the shape of the item affects the reflection. Does it produce a wobbly, warped, bigger or smaller image?

If you can find a large puddle or have a water bath which is suitable for the children to look into, let them look at their reflection and then see what happens to it when the water is disturbed.

Children also find it fun to breathe onto a mirror and see what happens as their reflection disappears and then slowly reappears.

Activity Two: Symmetry and Mirrors

This activity helps children to think about what a mirror image is, that is, identical but in reverse.

This is a variation on the traditional butterfly picture.

Fold a piece of paper in half and then unfold. Ask the child to draw, colour or paint an image on one side of the page. It need not be a butterfly, or half of an image, or indeed anything recognisable but the image should preferably go up to or close to the fold in the middle.

Then give the child a mirror and show them how to place it upright along the centre fold. They can then see how the mirror creates the other side of the image to make a symmetrical picture.

By altering the angle of the mirror, the image changes slightly.

You could extend this activity by following up with a traditional symmetrical painting where the other side is folded onto the paint. Children can compare this folded painted double image with the one they saw with the mirror.

Activity Three: Self Portrait

This activity allows children to really have fun with their mirror image and use it to investigate their faces.

Children should be given some time to look at themselves and take note of their face, their eye colour, their hair and so on before they start drawing or painting.

Some younger children feel overwhelmed by this activity and some may benefit from a starting point of a basic oval on their page or some prompts to look at specific and small elements of their face. Play it by ear according to their confidence levels.

It is important that children are able to use their imagination as well as their eyes for this activity, and should only be given help to produce an "accurate" representation of their face if that is important to them.