



Creative Classrooms: Using Found Materials and Loose Parts in Early Learning

Webinar

June 2024



Agenda



1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Understanding Loose Parts, Found Materials and DIY Classroom Resources
3. Loose Parts
4. DIY Classroom Resources
5. How else can we help your ECD Centre?

Introduction |



Grow ECD is a non-profit organisation that wants to see 5-star early learning happening in every neighbourhood. Our holistic model makes running a sustainable ECD business a possibility for all.

How do we help ECD centres? We equip and connect you with the tools, skills and resources you need to provide quality education while also improving your business sustainability.





**Heart for
children**

**Head for
business**

**Sustainable ECD
Business**

Africa A+ Schools enables:

- Preschools to deliver a **quality early education** that prepares today's children to be tomorrow's citizens.
- Arts-based education that develops **future-based** skills: creativity | imagination | problem-solving | critical thinking | an entrepreneurial mindset | collaboration
- Teachers who see themselves as **agents of change** in children's lives
- **Context** informed: you start from where you are and you build on your strengths
- Whole school approach. Everyone is **included**.
- **Sustainability**



Materials



A+ iZinto collects and distributes found, discarded and recyclable materials to be repurposed into creative teaching and learning materials that are accessible to everyone.

The A+ facilitators model how to use them before leaving them at the the ECD centre for the teachers to use with the children.



Understanding Found Materials, Loose Parts and DIY Classroom Resources



Found Materials

Loose Parts

Explore and create freely! OPEN-ENDED materials that are used as-is and that children can manipulate and explore freely to enhance creativity and critical thinking.



DIY Classroom Resources

Custom-made educational tools and toys made by teachers. Play is TEACHER DIRECTED and has a specific intended outcome in mind.



Found materials are the broad spectrum of items. Loose parts are part of the found materials; they are used freely for exploration and creativity. DIY resources, on the other hand, involve deliberate crafting and design to support specific educational goals.

Loose Parts Resource ideas:

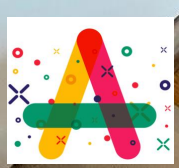
- **Natural materials** such as pine cones, sticks, rocks, shells, acorns and leaves
- **Craft items** such as pipe cleaners, beads, buttons, sequins, cotton reels, ice-cream sticks and feathers
- **Household items** such as egg cartons, bottle caps, milk carton lids, paper towel and toilet paper tubes
- **Wooden items** such as wood scraps or wooden blocks
- **Outdoor items** such as sand, water, containers, plastic gutters, pebbles or rocks



Loose parts in action!

Open-ended Play

Loose parts encourage open-ended play, where there is no predetermined outcome. Children use their imagination to create and invent, leading to diverse learning experiences.



Tips for Teachers: Loose Parts



- Loose Parts is a great addition for EVERY preschool!
- Thoughtfully select the loose parts you offer and the way that they are displayed. The way they are displayed will influence the way they are used.
- Set up a “loose parts station” - display items nicely and make it inviting
- Integrating loose parts into different areas of learning (math, science, art, etc.)
- Storage is important - keep items organised and labelled
- Safety tips: choose items that are non-toxic and not choking hazard
- Get parents involved with collection

Provocation ideas



Provocation (set up)



More storage ideas:



Storage Ideas:



Benefit: Why use loose parts in your classroom?

Play-based learning that supports the ELDAs and integrates with your curriculum!

Cognitive Development

- Encourages Creativity and Imagination
- Promotes Problem-solving and Critical Thinking

Physical Development

- Fine Motor Skills
- Gross Motor Skills

Social Development

- Encourages Collaboration and Social Skills
- Fosters Communication

Emotional Development

- Builds Confidence and Independence
- Provides Emotional Expression

Sensory Development

- Enhances Sensory Exploration

Practical Benefits

- Cost-effective and Accessible
- Versatile and Inclusive

More About: DIY Classroom Resources

DIY (Do-It-Yourself) classroom resources are custom-made educational tools and materials created by educators or parents to enhance the learning environment and engage children in hands-on activities. These resources are tailored to support specific learning objectives, cater to the unique needs of students, and often recycled and repurpose materials.

Examples of DIY Classroom Resources

1. Sensory Bins
2. Learning Games
3. Story Stones
4. DIY Puzzles
5. Homemade Musical Instruments
6. Educational Charts and Posters
7. Homemade Flashcards



Idea:

MAKE YOUR OWN

Colour and Counting match game



Use during morning ring, educational games, art and free play, Second ring / maths.

What you need

1. Scissors
2. Glue stick
3. Black felt tip pen
4. Paper plates
5. Colour paper - cut up/ torn up/ shredded
6. Colour pegs (same colours as the paper)

Instructions

Step 1

Divide the paper plate into 5 parts. Use your felt tip pen to draw the parts/sections.

Step 2

Using the glue stick to stick down the colour paper to fill up each different section of the plate. e.g. one part is only blue. Repeat till the plate is covered. Let it dry completely.

Step 3

Use the felt tip pen

to write the numbers 1-5

Step 4

Use the same colour pegs to match each section with the correct number of pegs to represent each number. e.g. blue- 1 – one blue peg.

Step 5

Enjoy and have fun.



Idea:

MAKE YOUR OWN Music shaker



GROW ECD

Use during music, morning ring, greeting, sensory activity

What you need

1. Empty clean polystyrene cups/ plastic cups/ disposable cups
2. Stickers
3. Seeds / beans etc.
4. Sticky tape

Instructions

Step 1

Pour the seeds/beans or items that will shake into one of the cups.

Step 2

Put the other cup on top so that the open ends are connected. Then use the sticky tape to seal the cups and stick them together securely.

Step 3

Use the stickers to decorate the shaker.

Step 4

Enjoy and have fun



Copyright © 2023, Grow ECD. All rights reserved.

GROW ECD





Tip Tip: Download DIY “Make your own resources” guides from the Grow Giraffe and Meerkat app:



MAKE YOUR OWN Box construction

Use during free play, art, free time, construction and fine motor

What you need

1. Scissors
2. Glue stick
3. Variety of boxes collected from home. (Cardboard)
4. Sticks, straws string or any other collected items to add to the construction

Instructions

Step 1
Collect a variety of boxes from home. Collect any other items that will add to the construction such as straws, string, sticks etc.

Step 2
Place the boxes together, use a sharp object to puncture holes into some of the boxes to allow the straws or sticks to fit and connect some boxes.

MAKE YOUR OWN Music shaker

Use during music, morning ring, greeting, sensory activity

What you need

1. Empty clean polystyrene cups/ plastic cups/ disposable cups
2. Stickers
3. Seeds / beans etc.
4. Sticky tape


Instructions

Step 1
Pour the seeds/beans or items that will shake into one of the cups.

Step 2
Put the other cup on top so that the open ends are connected. Then use the sticky tape to seal the cups and stick them together securely.

Step 3
Use the stickers to decorate the shaker.

Step 4
Enjoy and have fun



How else can
Grow ECD help
your preschool?





WhatsApp Helpdesk:
082 795 4693



Facebook:
facebook.com/GrowECD/



Instagram:
instagram.com/grow_ecd/



YouTube:
youtube.com/grow_ecd

Free ECD Apps



Giraffe App:

ECD Centre Owner/Principal



Meerkat App:

Teacher



Lion App:

Parent/Caregiver



Your ECD One-Stop Shop

Centre Management Tool

GROW ECD

Admin

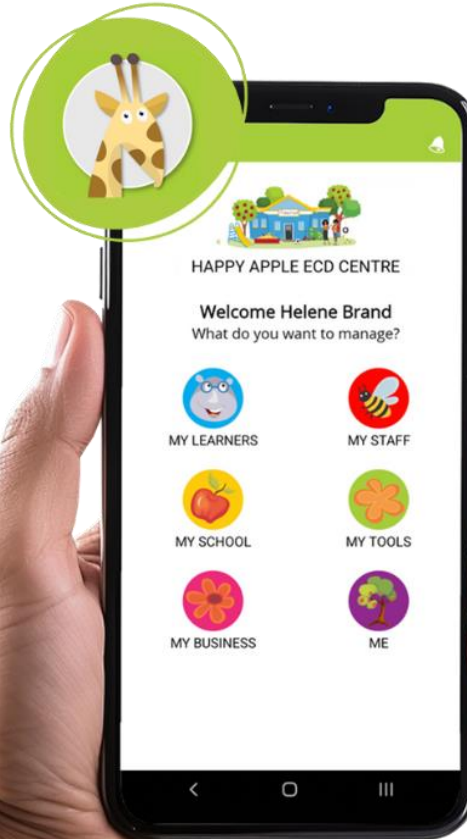
- Staff and learner enrolment
- Staff and learner attendance
- Document upload & storage
- School profile management

Assessments

- Learner assessment tool and development reports
- Teacher assessment
- Registration self-assessment

Finances (My Business)

- Budgeting
- Income & Expense tracker
- Profit & Loss indicator
- Business performance



Tools

- Curriculum (teacher's guide). Paid feature
- Policies, procedures, templates
- Education, business and parenting support resources
- Download reports

Communications

- Parents
- Teachers
- School calendar & events

Training & Development (data-free)

- Teacher development
- Business skills
- Life skills

GROW ECD

Free Resource Library

Over 300 free downloads.

- Centre Management
- Forms and Templates
- Marketing your ECD
- Parent Comms
- Policies Procedures
- Positive Discipline
- Professional Development
- Registering your Centre
- Numeracy
- Nutrition
- Gross Motor resources
- Inclusive Education
- Literacy
- Art & Creativity
- Social & Emotional Development



Free Online Training

Centre owners and teachers can do data-free online training through the App. We already have 12 courses available covering business, education and life skills. A certificate of completion is provided.

Most popular courses:

- Teacher Development Programme
- Marketing
- Budgeting
- Learner Assessment
- Me and My Money
- Teacher Assessment
- Fundraising
- Registration
- Intro to Grow programme
- Parenting Skills
- Nutrition



Our Online Curriculum

- ✓ An online learning platform which provides ALL your teachers with **data-free** access to detailed **daily lesson plans**.
- ✓ **40 weeks** of themed content.
- ✓ It is like **a mentor in your ear**.
- ✓ **Videos, photographs, recordings of songs, downloads** and program extension ideas.
- ✓ **Only R3500 per centre for all 4 terms.**
All your teachers, and assistant teachers get access.

GROW_{ECD}



ECD Small Business Accelerator

GROW_{ECD}

R600

Get the skills, tools and mindset you need to run your preschool like a business.

This in-person training course is a "boot camp" programme designed exclusively for ECD centre owners. R600 per person. Includes lunch, printed notes and a certificate of completion.

Six modules designed to show centre owners how to:

1. think like a social entrepreneurs.
2. take control of money matters.
3. run a preschools like a business.
4. deliver quality education that meets NCF requirements.
5. meet registration requirements.



Johannesburg | Durban | Cape Town | Gqeberha

GROW ECD

App Support Helpdesk

Available during office hours



WhatsApp or Call:
+27827954693

cape town



Email:
support@growecd.org.za



Our Offices



Cape Town (Thornton)

infocpt@growecd.org.za
021 5312134

Durban (Glenwood)

infodbn@growecd.org.za
031 207 3756

Johannesburg (Midrand)

infojhb@growecd.org.za
011 314 0306

Eastern Cape (Gqeberha)

ati@growecd.org.za
067 040 7962

Thank you. Stay in touch.



info@growecd.org.za
www.growecd.org.za



africaaplusschools@gmail.com
africaaplus.org.za