

After-school Kinders at Collegiate

By Katie Favell

After working with the after-school kinders for several weeks, I wanted to introduce them to an exploration of light and colour activity that I had run with other groups. I was really curious to see if this age of children would respond to the prompt as opposed to the preschooler I had previously worked with.

I brought in and covered the 20 foot table with long runs of white paper, and on top I placed a rack of crystals, prisms, disco balls, and a rainbow decoration. On the table I also placed flashlights, coloured cellophane scraps, as well as my colourful paint sticks. The prompt I gave the children was "let's create rainbows!"

"How?" "What are those?" Referring to the prisms and crystals, "Can I have a flashlight?" The questions were instant, which meant so was the curiosity. I began to demonstrate how I would create a rainbow. I took my flashlight and pointed it at the prisms to create refracted light in the darkened room. I then used my coloured cellophane to put over my flashlight to change the light colour being emitted. Then finally I began to colour on the paper in a rainbow pattern with my paint sticks. The room was dark and the chatter of the children picked up as they began their own experiments with colour and light.

3 4-year old girls gathered around the prisms and began to lead the others in shining light through the crystals that were dangling from a wire rack I had set up. They then began to take turns shining the light in different directions to try and project the prism light onto the paper. Unfortunately, it was an overcast day and the flashlights we were using didn't create the full rainbow spectrum that prisms are capable of. One 4 year old boy began to colour and draw himself with his arms stretched out onto the paper.

It wasn't long before the flashlights started pointing to the ceiling. Then using the cellophane they began to change the light colours. One girl who was slightly older than the others noticed that when you drew a rainbow on the paper and then put cellophane over the drawing, some of the colours would change or disappear completely.

From behind me I noticed the group of 3 girls who had taken charge of the prisms, had now moved to the carpet. They were dancing and waving their flashlights around and changing the colours projected on the ceiling. "Miss Amelia" I said to the Educator in charge, "it seems there is a disco going on behind me. If it's a disco we are missing one thing!" "Already on it!" She replied smiling. She went and got the classroom speaker and began to play the children's pop music for them to continue to dance too.

A rainy day rainbow activity turned into a dance party using the same materials I had previously used, in a very fun and unexpected way.



