



## **Everyday Places and Routines** [available July 15, 2009](#)

This topic is an investigation of life as we know it and as it is seen through the eyes of young children. Daily life for young children is new and exciting, but it can also be scary and mixed with anxiety. Starting school can accompany a whole range of emotions and anticipations. By learning more about school, how to get ready for school, and other aspects of their busy day, children can gain a sense of mastery when it comes to their abilities to transition and self-regulate. Children will know more about their daily schedule, the school routine, and their routines at home as they advance through the skills and concepts included.

## **Skin Covers Many Things** [available August 15, 2009](#)

Skin is all around us. It is our largest organ and one that is both interesting and important to learn about. Children will explore the many reasons why humans and animals have skin. They will investigate differences and similarities and will learn the importance of taking care of their skin. This topic also includes investigations into the skins of plants and trees and explores the skins of fruits and vegetables. Children will even learn about nutrition and health through active learning.

## **Building** [available September 15, 2009](#)

Children are natural builders – they sort, stack, and create, expressing themselves and what they know. In this topic, children will investigate architecture, art, and the act of building in the classroom and elsewhere. Many materials are used to build things big and small, and children will have the opportunity to explore them all. Exploration into building and structures of all kinds, how they are built, and who builds them will give children a deeper understanding of building and architecture. But it won't stop there! Children will also investigate animals that build, what they build, and how they do it.

## **Textures and Fabrics** [available October 15, 2009](#)

Textures and fabrics surround us in our homes and schools and even surround our bodies. This investigation will take children from their own closets to the textures and fabrics found in and made by nature. A variety of textures will engage children in learning about descriptive adjectives and their own sense of touch. With textures that teach and fabrics to feel, children will be immersed in nature and the nature of the sense of touch.

## **Creations and Innovations** [available November 15, 2009](#)

Creations and innovations are constantly changing and evolving. This topic will be kindled by children's natural curiosity and sense of wonder. Children will be given many opportunities to work on short- and long-term, two- and three-dimensional creative projects and processes. They will explore innovations and technologies through hands-on activities that will immerse them in problem solving and out-of-the-box thinking skills.

## **Light and Dark** [available December 15, 2009](#)

Light and dark are more than just night and day. There is lightness and darkness to almost everything that is around us, and both play vital roles in our lives. Color gradients from light to dark are found in nature and in human-made creations. Our days and nights are regulated by light and dark and affect us more than we might realize. Investigations into shadows, opposites, and artificial and natural light will allow children to explore to the darkest depths and the brightest lights.

# Summary of Topics 2009–10

continued

## **What Happens When** [available January 15, 2010](#)

When children ask, “What happens when,” their world opens up to endless possibilities, as they are put into the driver’s seat. Through active play, children naturally encounter consequences and reactions. They are able to draw conclusions and create scientific hypotheses based on their previous experiments. This topic will include cause-and-effect relationships embedded in scientific principles, as well as mathematical, communicative, and social/emotional effects.

## **Eco-Exploring** [available February 15, 2010](#)

Being “green” is more than just a behavior; it requires an understanding of the purpose and realities of our natural world and how they relate to what we do every day. Children will explore ecology, biology, and conservation during this topic. Through an appreciation for the environment and the humans and animals that share this planet, children will gain the ability to think critically with compassion and empathy. Children are the caretakers of the planet, so it is vital that they are given opportunities to explore their world in order to value and save it.

## **Traveling** [available March 15, 2010](#)

Traveling encompasses daily jaunts across town as well as long hikes during which an actual compass is needed! Traveling offers children and adults a wide variety of opportunities and possibilities that would not be available if we all stayed in one familiar place. Children are exposed to cultures, communities, and scenes while traveling. There are many ways to travel and many places to travel to. Children must be open to the world and the variety of people in it before they can truly know themselves and their own communities. It is this openness that will be developed and respected through an investigation into traveling.

## **Wings and Things** [available April 15, 2010](#)

This topic will take children into the sky to pursue the knowledge of flight. Children will be encouraged to spread their wings to expand their understanding of birds, bugs, airplanes, and other things that fly. Winged things buzz in and out of our lives, but we rarely get an opportunity like this to thoroughly investigate their wings and flying abilities. Children’s powerful imaginations will give them insight into what it would be like to have wings and be able to fly.

## **Summer Side Trips** [available May 15, 2010](#)

**Summer Side Trips** will fill the dog days of summer with new adventures. Featured subtopics include:

- Summer Fun – Experiences get children actively discovering outside with tools provided for every child, including a beach ball
- Art Gallery – The sky is the limit with children’s creativity as they explore new media, environments, and ways of expressing themselves
- Nature Escapes – Experiences provide opportunities for young explorers to investigate their natural world

**Summer Side Trips** includes additional summer support materials for every child, including a keepsake book for capturing summer memories, a magnifying glass for discovering summer treasures, and more. Join in for a summer made easier through **Summer Side Trips!**