

Playgroup Ideas

Term 2, 2010

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Edited by Heidi Jane Harding, Children's Mission Planner for MRN.

Uniting Church **Playgroup**



mission resourcing network



Playgroup Ideas — Term 2, 2010

Dear reader or browser,

We are happy that you have opened this resource; and we hope it will be a help to you in planning a program for your church-based playgroup.

In order to continue producing this kind of resource, we need to hear from you. So please take the time to let us know how you are using the resource and to give us your suggestions for future editions. Send your response - you can use this feedback form if you wish: hharding@sa.uca.org.au

Thanks, and God's blessings to you and the families you support,

Heidi

Heidi Jane Harding,
Children's Mission Planner, Uniting Church in South Australia.

FEED BACK FORM

Name and location of **your playgroup**

Your name and your role in the playgroup.....

Number and ages of children attending your playgroup

Special features of your playgroup

.....

.....

How many **Playgroup Ideas** documents have you looked at before this?

What have you found useful in **Playgroup Ideas**?.....

.....

.....

What improvements can you suggest for **Playgroup Ideas**?

.....

.....

Any other comments?.....

.....

Do you give out the **Family Planner** to your playgroup families? Yes/No

Term 3, 2010 Here are the themes we expect to be featuring. We'd love your suggestions for activities, songs, games, stories and faith enrichment ideas.

WINTER

TREES (1/8 National Tree Day)

JEANS (Jeans for Genes Day 6/8).

ART (SA Living Artists Festival 30/7-22/8)

SCIENCE (National Science Week)

BRIDGES (Children's Book Week Theme: *across the bridge*)

FATHERS (Fathers' Day 5/9).....

OLD MCDONALD (Adelaide Show 3-11)

RED

Introduction

Term 2 2010 Playgroup Ideas

This resource is designed to help leaders of Christian playgroups in planning their program.

This resource is not a set curriculum; it provides ideas that you may pick and choose from or adapt to your own situation. The themes and activity ideas can fit into whatever format you have established for your playgroup.

This **Playgroup Ideas Resource** often ties in with the **Family Planner** which is a free gift from the Uniting Church to families. Churches can download the planner from:

<http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/family-planner.html>

A **Playgroup Handbook**, which provides information about starting and running a playgroup is available on the same web site on the playgroup page:

<http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/playgroups.html>

Young Children's Activities ☺

We have been asked for activities that can suit 1-2 year olds with help from carers. These activities usually involve pasting and painting type activities rather than fiddly construction. They are indicated with a ☺. These activities do not need to be done accurately to be a success! Stories and songs are good for all ages as long as they are done quickly and at a time when the children are least tired!

Faith Enrichment Ideas

Playgroups organised by churches and staffed by Christians serve young families in many ways. Their Christian character is shown through the development of caring relationships. Some Christian playgroups also introduce Christian concepts into their program through activities, songs and stories.

We respect the view of some churches that playgroup is only pre-evangelical, with a policy not to mention anything 'Christian' unless the topic is brought up by the parent or carer. However, we are suggesting small and gentle ways that can open up conversation about faith.

Many parents have tried to attend Sunday church services with their children but have stopped attending because the service didn't cater for children, was not at a convenient time for their family or they left feeling uninspired. Other parents have never made attending traditional church worship a part of their family lifestyle. A playgroup can be an alternative 'church' experience *if* the playgroup provides opportunities for the family to explore the Christian faith.

Our greatest gift is Jesus, so let's not hide him from those that we care about simply because we are afraid to offend. This **Playgroup Ideas Resource** provides a range of Faith Enrichment Ideas. Playgroup leaders can use one or more of these suggestions to introduce a faith dimension into the playgroup session in a natural way.

The parents and carers who come into the church for playgroup know that the organisers are Christian, so they would find it reasonable to have some appropriate faith discussion or activity. It's important to state in your playgroup information posters and brochures that you do have some Christian content in your playgroup program.

You know the families who attend your playgroup, so you can best decide what is appropriate for their situation.

Theme Ideas This Term

Week 1	Playgroup Olympics
Week 2	Digging and Diggers
Week 3	Mums
Week 4	Playgroup helpers
Week 5	Feet and toes
Week 6	Tea Party
Week 7	Frogs
Week 8	our world
Week 9	Kings and Queens
Week 10	Bicycles
Week 11	Post Office

Note: Throughout this resource the term 'carer' is used for the parent, relative, day care staff or other carer who brings a child to playgroup.

Additional Resources

Music

The songs we suggest are mostly from Playschool. Many carers are already familiar with them and this helps with the sing-a-long! Playschool CD's are available at the ABC stores and often at department stores such as Target.

Here are a few that we have specifically mentioned in this resource. You won't need all of these resources as you don't need to do every song listed each week, and chances are you will know many of them anyway!



Musical Fun

This pack includes **Oomba Baroomba** and **There's a Bear in There**.
Price \$14.95 ABC Shop



Sing-A-Long Songs

Price: \$9.95 ABC Shop



This pack includes **Playschool Favourites** and **Hullabaloo**.
Price: \$14.95 ABC Shop



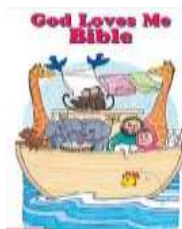
The New Useful Book has the sheet music to many popular songs and activities that suit the theme of the songs, it is 'a very useful book'!

Price: \$19.95 ABC Shop

Story Books

We have suggested a variety of story books to fit with the theme of each week. These are simply suggestions and you can use whatever best suits your group and that are available on your bookshelf or from the local library.

Bible Story Books



We recommend that you have a children's story Bible.

We really like the Candle story Bibles; the *God Loves Me Bible* is especially good for a young group.

The Ralph Milton *Family Story Bible* (available from Media Com) is also quite good.



MediaCom

Website: <http://www.mediacom.org.au> Online orders & browsing available!

Visit: 14 Eton Rd. Keswick 5035, South Australia

Phone toll free: 1-800-811-311

Email: admin@mediacom.org.au

Playgroup Olympics

May be linked with the Special Olympics (19-24 April)

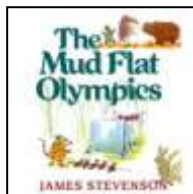
Olympic goals of 'Faster, stronger, higher' imply competition. In playgroup you can alter these slightly and speak to children in terms of 'as fast as you can', 'as strong as you can' and 'as high as you can'.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Guest:** Special Olympics are being held in Adelaide this year, so it's likely that you will know someone who volunteers as a helper at the event. Invite the visitor to come and talk (and show some pictures) of the Special Olympics. **Alternative:** Invite a representative of your local Little Athletics to come and show some of their activities.
- ☺ **Olympic events:** Organise several 'Playgroup Olympics' events that the children can participate in, eg running race; crawling race, obstacle course, long jump, beanbag throw (accuracy: three tries to get the bag into a box, or distance), weight lifting (choose items to be lifted carefully; each child starts with the lightest and progresses to heavier until they are unable to lift something). During the events encourage carers to use words of encouragement, eg 'as fast as you can' and to cheer on their own competitor.
- **Medals:** Preprint the logo (see appendix) on gold-coloured paper. Carers help children make Playgroup Olympics medals. Cut out the logo and a cardboard disk slightly larger than the logo. Glue the logo to the disk, decorate the disk (eg with tinsel or glue on tinsel) and write the child's name on the back. Attach a paperclip to the top of the disk and thread a ribbon through the paper clip, tie the ribbon into a loop so children can wear it around their necks. Collect the medals for the awards ceremony.
- ☺ **Awards Ceremony:** Children and carers sit in a semi circle with a low box as a dais in the centre. Display an Australian flag behind the dais. Play the Australian national anthem. Call out a child's name from their medal. The child comes to stand on the dais. A volunteer (or your special guest) puts the medal around the child's neck and shakes hands, saying 'well done!' The group claps. Repeat for each child.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families collections about Olympics and Athletics, eg

Watch for a brand new book called **Special Olympics** (First book) by children's author Fern G. Brown



The Mud Flat Olympics
by James Stevenson

SONGS TO SING

1. *Advance Australia Fair* (Kids won't be able to sing it, but play a recording and have children and carers stand and listen to it as they hold their medals. This is what Olympic winners do. They are proud to represent their country and this song is a sign of their country.)
2. *This is the way we [run a race, lift a weight . . . reflecting Playgroup Olympics events]* Tune: 'This is the way we wash our clothes'.

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** If children make Olympic medals, point out that the words on it are from the Bible.
- **Talk about:** The man who wrote part of the Bible liked to talk about all of life as a race. He said things like: 'If only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me.' (Acts 20:24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize (1 Corinthians 9:24) and 'Do your best?' (2 Timothy 2:15)
- **Wonder:** I wonder what it means to do your best at playgroup . . . at home. . .
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for giving us bodies that can do amazing things like running and jumping and throwing and drawing and . . . Helps us always to do our best. Amen.
- **Bible verse:** . . . Do your best . . . (2 Timothy 2:15)

DIGGING and DIGGERS

May be linked with ANZAC DAY (traditionally 25 April, this year the public holiday is Monday 26th)

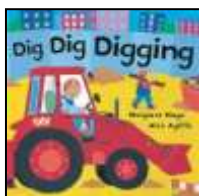
DID YOU KNOW: Why are Australian soldiers known as 'diggers'? The actual origin has been lost, but the term was first used during World War I and may have referred either to the many ex-gold miners (diggers) among the troops or the activity of trench digging.

If children in your group have parents (or other close friends and relatives) in the armed services either locally or overseas, you may want to emphasise the Diggers aspect of this topic.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Visitor:** Invite someone who operates heavy 'digging' machinery to talk to the children about their job. **Alternative:** Invite a service person to come in uniform and talk with the children. They may also show and explain any medals and talk about their uniform. Keep the discussion to training, relationships and helping people; avoid combat tales.
- ☺ **Digging:** Give children lots of experience digging: Use child-size shovels to dig sand from a sand pit into a bucket and move it to another sand pit. Use play earth-moving equipment in a sand pit. Use a trowel to dig in a garden. Use a spoon to dig in a bowl of dry rice.
- ☺ **Treasure hunt:** In a fill a large tub with shredded paper. Mix in with the paper enough paper-wrapped 'treasures' (eg crayons, badges) for all the children. Each child digs for a treasure using their hands only. Once they have found the treasure, another child has a chance.
- **Shovel:** Carers help children make a shovel from a plastic fork. Look at the fork. Is it a shovel? How is it like a shovel? How is it different from a shovel? How could we make it look like a shovel? Wrap a strip of paper around the tines of the fork to make the blade of the shovel. Use sticky tape to anchor the paper to the fork before wrapping and to itself after wrapping.
- **Digger's hat:** Carers help children make a digger's hat. See pattern and instructions in appendix. Children can wear their digger hats and 'march like soldiers'.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about digging and/or Diggers, eg



Dig, Dig, Digging
by Margaret Mayo



Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel
by Virginia Lee Burton



Memorial
by Gary Crew and Shaun Tan
Share the pictures, not the story.

SONGS TO SING

- *Dig, dig, dig a hole. Dig it with a spoon.* (shovel, space, machine)
Digging, digging, digging digging. How far can you go? TUNE: Row, row, row your boat.
- *Say Chester, have you heard about Harry?* (Patsy Biscoe)
- *The Last Post* — *not a song for kids to sing.* This music helps us remember soldiers 'Diggers' who went to other places to protect us. Play a recording. Stand at attention and listen to it.

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** If children make shovels, write on the blade: 'Jesus is my best treasure.'
- **Read or tell:** the Bible story of the man who dug up a treasure in his field (Matthew 13:34)
- **Wonder:** I wonder what would be the best treasure you could find.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for all sorts of treasures you give us every day (reflect children's 'wondering' comments. **OR** Thank you, God, for the soldiers who help protect our country. Please protect them, too. Amen.

Note: there are other suggestions about ANZAC Day in the current issue of *Faith Family*. Contact the Resource Centre for Children's and Family Ministry (rccfm@bigpond.com) for information.

Mums

May be linked with Mothers Day (Sunday 9 May)

If children come to playgroup with an adult other than their mother, ask them to identify: 'Who is like your mummy here at playgroup today?' You may also want to ascertain whether the child lives with their mother, and how discussion of mothers may impact on the child.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **A gift for mum:** An adult other than the mum, helps each child make a gift for their mum or grandma/nanna. Make a flower from a coloured patty pan, attach it with sticky tape to a green pipe-cleaner stem. Add a twist of green crepe paper for leaves. On a sandwich bag, write 'for my mum'. 'Wrap' the gift in a sandwich bag and tie it closed with a ribbon bow.
- ☺ **Playing family:** Set out a playhouse or a special area with dolls and household equipment and encourage children to play house/family. What does mum do at home? What do other people in the family do?
- ☺ **Dress up like mummy:** Provide an assortment of women's clothing and encourage children to 'dress up like mummy'. Carers help children name the clothing items and practice dressing skills: buttons, snaps, zippers, legs in trousers, arms in sleeves, etc. A full-length mirror will make this more fun.
- **'Mum' shots:** Use the wonders of modern digital photography to create a slide show or a gallery of printed 'mug shots' of the mums in your group. Children look at the photos and find their own mums. How do you know that's your mum? Think of words to describe what mum looks like: hair colour, hair length, glasses/jewellery, etc. They identify the mums of other children.
- **A card for Mum:** See the appendix for a pattern and instructions for one way of making a Mothers' Day card. For a ☺ activity you could pre print a card that they could glue glitter onto.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about mums, eg



Mama, Do you love me?

by Barbara M Joosse

Are you my mother?

by P.D. Eastman

What Parents do

by Jan Harper



SONGS TO SING

- *I love her and she loves me, and mummy is her name-o.*
M-U-M-M-Y, M-U-M-M-Y, M-U-M-M-Y. And Mummy is her name-o. TUNE: B-I-N-G-O'
- *I love Mummy, I love Mummy. Yes, I do. Yes, I do.*
And my Mummy loves me, and my Mummy loves me.
Yes, she does, yes she does. TUNE: Frere Jacques'
- Happy Mothers' Day to you TUNE: Happy Birthday

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** Add a Christian message to the children's card.
- **Read or tell:** The story of Hanna's prayer for a child (1 Samuel 1). Emphasise how much the mum wanted a child, not that she gave him to the priest.
- **Talk about:** God created all kinds of families. All families are different. Mothers can be important parts of the family.
- **Wonder:** I wonder why God gave us mothers. I wonder how God wants us to treat our mums.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for families and for mothers.
- **Bible Verse:** Respect your father and your mother. (Exodus 20:12, Good News Bible)

Note: A special all-age worship service 'Marvellous Mums' for Mothers Day is available on <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au> (Click on 'Children's Ministry' and then 'All Age Worship')

Playgroup Helpers

May be linked with National Volunteers Week (10 May)

A volunteer helps or serves without being paid (or without getting tangible rewards).

You may introduce the word and concept 'Volunteer' by using it as often as possible during the session, and by giving children lots of opportunities to 'volunteer' to help with any chores you can think of.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

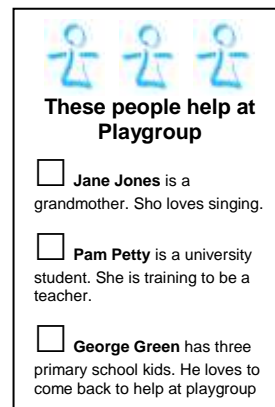
- ☺ **Playing playgroup:** Children can make up their own playgroup using dolls and teddies.
- **Thank-you necklace for volunteers:** Make a necklace for each volunteer from pretty ribbon or a leather thong. Carers help children make a thank you bauble for each of the volunteers. Supply a range of different colours and texture of card cut into pieces about 5cm square. In the centre of each square, write 'thank you from [child's name]'. Cut the card into any shape, but don't cut away the writing. Attach a paperclip to the card.
Children give the baubles to the volunteers, who attach them to their necklaces with the paper clips. They could do this during the story time described below or at the end of the day the volunteers can line up and children pass by giving each one their bauble.
- ☺ **Playgroup helper's card or booklet:** Prepare a card or a booklet that briefly introduces your playgroup helpers to both carers and children. Children/carers can see how many of the playgroup helpers they can find and call by name. They may collect autographs or ticks in their book or on their card.

STORIES TO SHARE Ask each of your volunteers to bring along a book that was special to them as a young child or that was a special book to share with their children/grandchildren.

Have the volunteers seated in separate spaces and encourage children with their carers to move from one site to another to chat with the volunteers about the books and the memories connected with the books.

Each volunteer can have a rubber stamp (possibly related to their book, or with their initial) and stamp the card (or the back of the hand) of each child who chats with them.

Photos: A photographer takes (and prints) photos of the volunteers with groups of children. These can be given to the volunteers as an extra 'thank you' and/or used as a display honouring the volunteers for playgroup people and the congregation to see.



SONGS TO SING

- *Thank you for helping us at playgroup;
Thank you for everything you do.
Today and every day at playgroup,
We want to thank you.* TUNE: Thank you for giving me the morning (Bible song)

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Read or tell:** A children's version of the story of Philip (and six other people) chosen to serve the people as deacons (Acts 6:1-6).
- **Talk about:** Things (playgroup) helpers do.
- **Wonder:** I wonder why some people like to help other people.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for the people who help us here at playgroup.
- **Bible verse:** We love, because God first loved us. (1 John 4:19 NIV)

Feet and Toes

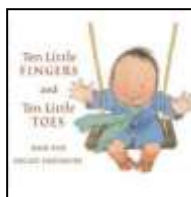
ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Guest:** Invite a podiatrist (or another knowledgeable person) to visit playgroup and talk to both carers and children about feet and foot-care.
- ☺ **Off with the shoes:** In small groups of two or three families, children and carers remove their footwear and pile it all together or put it in a bag for that small group. Look at their bare feet and compare them: biggest, smallest. Count toes.
With older children start identifying left and right: Sitting in a circle play a modified version of loopy Loo: *I put my right foot in. I take my right foot out. I give my right foot a shake, shake, shake and scoot myself about.* (Repeat for left foot and two feet.)
- ☺ **This little piggy:** With shoes off, each carer says the nursery rhyme with their own child. Point to one toe for each 'piggy' and give them a big hug after the last line:
This little piggy went to market; this little piggy stayed home.
This little piggy had roast beef; this little piggy had none.
This little piggy cried all the way home. Wheeeeeeeeeee.
- ☺ **Foot massage:** With shoes off: carers give children a foot massage. The podiatrist may help with this. You may want to supply some hand cream to make the experience more pleasant.
- ☺ **Walking trail:** Set up a trail that children can walk along in bare feet and feel the different surfaces. If the trail is outdoors, use natural surfaces. If it is indoors use, for example: a lambskin, a tray of sand, a rubber mat, a tray of smooth stones, a silky sheet (anchored so it stays in place), a sheet of bubble-wrap plastic . . .
- ☺ **Footprint art:** Carers help their children make footprints on a piece of paper. Have a shallow layer of tempera or finger-paint in an ice cream carton or other container. Carers dip the sole of the child's bare foot in paint and help them step onto the paper. Let the paint dry while washing and drying the child's foot. Examine the footprint and think 'what does it look like?' Turn it in different directions with the same question. When you have decided what the painting is (it may just be a foot or a design) use textas to add features, eg eye and beak on a chick.
- **Find your shoes:** Small groups sort through the socks and shoes and identify to whom each item belongs. Carers help children put their footwear back on.



STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about feet and toes,

In non-fiction books about human bodies look for sections about feet and toes; in books about different animals, look at different kinds of feet and toes.



Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes

by Mem Fox and Helen Oxenbury

SONGS TO SING

- *Head and shoulders, knees and toes (or 'feet and toes')*
- *If you're happy and you know it stamp your feet (touch your toes)*
- *This little piggy went to market*

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** If children make a footprint painting, you may write on it, God gives me feet.
- **Read or tell** a children's version of the story of Peter and John healing a man who could not walk (Acts 3:1-9)
- **Wonder:** I wonder what God want us to do with our feet.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for our feet. Help us use them to go where you want us to go and to do what you want us to do. Amen.
- **Bible Verse:** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

Tea Party

May be linked with Australia's Biggest Morning Tea (27 May)

This could be the one time this term when you provide carers for the playgroup children and invite carers to another area for a special adult morning tea. This might be done as a fundraiser for the Cancer Council or simply as a time out for carers. (See www.biggestmorningtea.com.au)

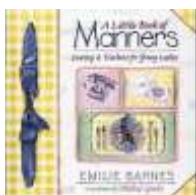
OR organise a tea party for the children or for their dolls or teddies.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

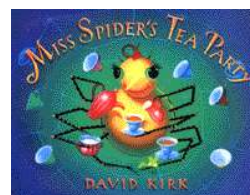
- **Guest:** invite an older person who tells about traditional formal tea parties. They can dress in formal clothing (eg dress, hat and gloves; suit, tie and hat) and demonstrate proper manners for a tea party: please, thank you, small sips, small bites, serviette on lap, pat mouth with serviette, elbows off the table. . .
- **Manners:** choose two or three table manners that you feel it is important for children to use and make a game of practicing the manners (see above). Make games of practicing these manners; children teach them to dolls.
- ☺ **Placemats:** Prepare a placemat pattern on A-4 paper that shows where to place cup, plate, spoon, and serviette. Grab an attractive border from your computer. Carers talk with children about the things at each person's place at a tea party. ☺ Children can decorate the mat. They can use it just for today or you can laminate it for children to take home.
- ☺ **Have a tea party:** Several adults and several children sit together at a child-size table. Children can help set the table with a placemat, small plate, cup, spoon and serviette for each person. One of the adults acts as hostess for the table, serving small portions of food and drink to children as they ask for it and say thank-you. **Alternatively**, children set up a tea party for dolls.
- **Colour game:** Ask children to name a colour. Say the rhyme:
Ladybug, ladybug dressed in [pink]; seeing you has made me think.
I'm inviting friends to tea; won't you come along with me.
All the people wearing that colour top gather together. Repeat for other colours.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about tea parties and/or table manners, eg.

The story of 'The Mad Hatter's Tea Party' from a children's version of **Alice in Wonderland**



A Little Book of Manners
by Emilie Barnes



Miss Spider's Tea Party
by David Kirk

SONGS TO SING

- *I'm a little tea pot*
- *Polly put the kettle on* (Patsy Biscoe)

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** Pause before eating at the tea party and say a table grace — a prayer thanking God for the food. Add a table grace to a placemat pattern (see above).
- **Read or tell:** a children's version of the story of Jesus getting ready for the last supper Luke 22:7-21.
- **Talk about:** saying grace before a meal.
- **Wonder:** I wonder what God thinks when we ...thank him for our food . . . don't thank him
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for giving us food.
- **Bible verse:** God gives us everything we need to enjoy life. (1 Timothy 6:17, modified)

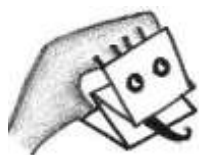
Frogs

May be linked with Save the Frogs day (30 May)

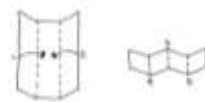
SOMETHING TO BRING: If any of the families have frog collections, ask them to bring along some non-breakable items for children to see.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Guest:** Invite someone who knows about frogs or who has frogs for pets. The visitor may talk briefly about frogs — possibly emphasising how different parts of their body function. If possible have a live frog that children can hold (or at least see up close).
- ☺ **Jump like a frog:** Think about how frogs move. Everyone tries jumping around like frogs. With older children, you could try a modified game of 'leap frog'. If you have child size swimming flippers, set children try them on and try walking with them on. You may like to have a frog obstacle course that the children could jump around.
- **Frog Puppet:** Carers help children make a frog puppet from a sheet of green paper.



Fold the paper in thirds forming a long strip.
 Fold the strip in quarters (zig-zag fashion)
 Draw eyes on the top (or stick on round hole reinforcers and fill in hole with black texta.
 Cut a long tongue from red paper.
 Glue it into the frog's mouth.



To operate, put thumb in the lower 'pocket' and the other fingers in the upper 'pocket'.
 Use the puppets to croak like a frog or to act out froggy singing rhymes.

- **Croak like a frog:** Demonstrate a frog sound — 'ribbit'. Let the children practice making the sound. Think of how the frog might say 'ribbit' when he's happy. Children try a happy 'ribbit'. Think how the frog might say 'ribbit' to tell someone to be careful . . . when they're hurt . . . to tell someone they like them. . . Note: 'Ribbit' is a rough copy of the frog's call. To hear some actual frog noises go to www.allaboutfrogs.org

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about frogs, eg



A Frog Thing
 by Erich Drachman
 Any of the **Frog and Toad** stories by Arnold Lobel

The aboriginal dreamtime story of **Tiddalik** the frog (see www.dreamtime.auz.net)

Sections of a non-fiction book like:

Frogs Swallow With Their Eyes!: A Weird-But-True Book by Melvin and Gilda Berger

SONGS TO SING

- *Five little speckled frogs were sitting on a hollow log
 Eating some most delicious bugs: Yum, yum.
 One frog jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool
 Now there are four little speckled frogs: Glub, glub. (Repeat in descending order.)*
- 'Ga-lump' when the little green frog one day, and the frog went 'glump glump glump'.
 But we all know frogs go 'La di da de da', (clapping or wave hands) 'la di da de da'.
 We all know frogs go (clap and wave) la di da de da. They dont go 'glump glump glump'

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** In addition to other frog sounds (Croak like a frog) try: how would a frog say thank you to God, . . please help me, God . . .
- **Read or tell:** a children's version of Adam in the garden naming all the animals (including frogs). See Genesis 2.
- **Wonder:** I wonder what a frog would say to God
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for frogs and all the other animals you put in the world.
- **Bible verse:** God made . . . all the animals in the world. (Jeremiah 27:5 modified)

Our World

May be linked with World Environment Day (5 June)

Is your playgroup modelling good practice for families? Do you strive to: **Reduce** consumption and waste? **Reuse** equipment and materials? **Recycle** everything you can?

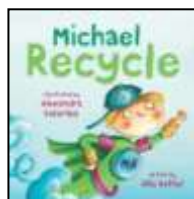
ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Visitor:** Invite someone who is actively involved with some aspect of environment protection to come and talk with your children about what they do.
- **I Spy:** 'Environment' is a big word that the children may not be familiar with. It may be better to simply use the word 'world'. If possible, take the children outside and play a simple version of 'I spy'. 'I spy something in our world. It is big and has leaves. What is it?' Children can call out the answer and point to the thing you identify. Repeat for a number of things, concentrating on the natural environment. With older children you might add: I spy something that shouldn't be there.
- ☺ **Environment poster:** Children work together to make a poster. Prepare a large sheet of card for the poster. Write on it as shown. While children are outdoors, if it is possible, each one picks up some leaves or sticks or flowers (or some litter) and brings them inside. Children glue their found items in outlined letter shapes. Talk about what it means to care for the world/environment. Your visitor may lead this conversation.
- ☺ **Plant a seed:** Carers help children paint yoghurt containers as pots for plants. Provide potting soil and seeds or seedlings (and instruction for ongoing care) so they can plant something in the pot either at playgroup or at home.
- ☺ **Recycle symbol:** Prepare sheets with the recycling symbol. Carers talk with their children about what the symbol shows, and about how they recycle things at home. Children can decorate the sheet with pictures of things they recycle. They can colour each of the arrows a different colour. Encourage people to look for the symbol in the community.
- **Recycle sorting:** Have a variety of recyclable items and labelled bins: paper, plastic, glass, aluminium. Carers help children sort the items into the bins. Discuss how they do this at home.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about the environment, eg



The Three R's
by Rosa M Curtis



Michael Recycle
by Ellie Bethel

SONGS TO SING

- *We recycle what we use. This little rhyme gives us the clues.
Glass and paper, plastic, tin, go in our recycling bin.
We must start now, we can't wait. Quick or it will be too late.* TUNE: Twinkle, twinkle little star
(based on Songs 4 Teachers)
- Sing any songs children know and like about things in our environment.
- Play the U-tube version of the 3Rs song for children to watch, listen and sing along.

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** Change the wording on your environmental poster to 'We take care of God's world'.
- **Read or tell:** briefly the story of Noah and the ark (Genesis 7- 9) Emphasise that after the flood God told Noah (and his descendants) to take care of the earth.
- **Wonder:** I wonder how God wants us to take care of the earth.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for this beautiful world. Help us to take good care of it.
- **Bible verse:** 'The earth and everything in it belong to God.' [Psalm 24:1, modified]

Kings and Queens

May be linked with Queen's Birthday (Public Holiday 14 June)

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Visitor:** Invite someone who has actually seen/ met Queen Elizabeth to talk with the children about the experience and possibly show some photos.
- **Picture gallery:** Display several pictures of real kings and queens; include a picture of Queen Elizabeth II. Carers help children recognize the picture of 'our real' queen, and to know her name.
- ☺ **Dress ups:** Provide some 'fancy clothes' so children can dress up as they think kings and queens should dress. (Your local Hungry Jacks store may supply you with paper crowns or at least one that you can use as a pattern. Children could wear the crown for the whole session.)
- **Cards:** Look at the pictures of the kings and queens in a regular deck of playing cards. What's strange about the pictures? You can look at them upside down. Play a game of 'Memory' using two kings and two queens. Repeat the game adding a pair of number cards, so children have six cards to choose from. As children become familiar with the game add more pairs of cards.
- ☺ **Upside down picture:** Print a card pattern (see appendix) for each child. With carers' help children drip paint (or make spots with glitter gel pen) on the top half of the card to colour in the king/queen's clothing. Then very carefully, fold the card on the dotted line (clean half over the painted half) and press down to make an ink print impression. Open out and allow to dry.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about queens and kings, eg



The Queen's feet

by Sarah Ellis

Look in any good, illustrated collection of **Nursery Rhymes** for rhymes featuring kings and queens.

Pussycat, Pussycat You can do this with three finger puppets. Flick off the mouse puppet at the end of the rhyme for children to retrieve.

*Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been?
I've been to London to visit the queen.
Pussycat, Pussycat what did you there?
I frightened a little mouse under her chair.*

SONGS TO SING

- *Old king Cole*
- *Lavender's Blue, Dilly, Dilly*
- *Happy Birthday . . . Queen Elizabeth* — sing this to recognize the Queen's Birthday.
- *Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat*

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Activity:** *God save the queen* — Explain that this is a special song that people sing for Queen Elizabeth and that they stand up when they hear the song, just as they would stand up if the queen came into the room. Play a recording of 'God save the queen'. All stand and listen; those who can, sing along.
- **Read or tell:** a children's version of the story of Queen Esther.
- **Talk about:** The ways Kings and Queens help their people
- **Wonder:** I wonder why God gives us kings and queens . . . I wonder what God expects kings and queens to do for us.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for Queen Elizabeth. Please help her to be a good queen.
- **Bible verse:** The king [queen] is God's servant to do you good. [Romans 13:4, modified]

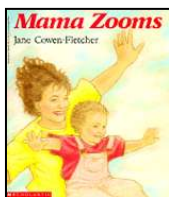
Bicycles and Tricycles

SOMETHING TO BRING: Invite several families to bring tricycles that the children can ride. Understand that there is always a possibility that it will not be returned in pristine condition.

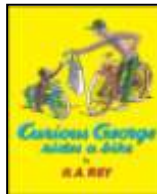
ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Visitor:** Invite someone who rides/races bikes to come along with their bicycle and dressed in riding gear and talk about riding and road safety. **Alternative:** Invite someone who sculpts motorbikes from beer bottle pull tops to demonstrate the skill, and perhaps give each child one of the bikes.
- ☺ **Bikes Collage:** Using old bike catalogues or sheets of cheap stickers children can make a collage about bikes.
- **Count and group** things in twos and threes. Have a table with several kinds of counters for children to group and count. Look at pictures of cycles or actual cycles and count wheels: bicycles (2 wheels) and tricycles (three wheels), a bicycle with training wheels (4 wheels) a stroller (3 or 4 wheels, or 6 or 8). If you're going to look at the book 'Mama Zooms' include a wheelchair.
- **Ride a tricycle** Children ride a tricycle with carer holding on. If a carer has a bicycle with a safe child's seat, that carer might give each child a ride around an enclosed yard or other safe area.
- ☺ **Pedal exercise:** Children and carers lie down and pedal their feet. Play a recording of 'The Pushbike Song (The Mixtures)' to set the pace. Carers and children can join in on the 'shhh, oo' and other songs.
- **Road safety:** Provide time for carers to discuss rules they have for children when they ride bicycles and tricycles, to explain why the rules are important and to make up short statements to help kids remember the rules. If carers have brought vehicles from home, You might have a mechanic check them for safety and to point out to adults and children what to look for.
- **Make a tricycle or bicycle:** Carers help children to examine a tricycle or bicycle and think about the parts: wheels, seat, handlebars, pedals, and frame. Carers help children make their choice of tricycle or bicycle from bottle tops and pipe cleaners. The cycles can be either freestanding or glued to card or paper.
- **L or P plates:** Carers talk with children about the 'L' (learning to drive) and 'P' (permitted to drive with special rules) plates they see on cars when young people are learning to drive. They help their child decide whether they should have an 'L' or a 'P' plate for their tricycle. Make the 'L' or 'P' plate by cutting out a square of plastic (eg from an ice cream container) and drawing the letter with texta. Punch two holes for a string to attach the plate to the child's tricycle or bicycle.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about bicycles and tricycles, eg



Mama Zooms
by Jane Cowen-Fletcher



Curious George Rides a Bike
by H. A. Rey

SONGS TO SING

- *The wheels on the **bike** go round and round* TUNE: 'The wheels of the bus'.

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Read or tell:** a children's version of the story of Solomon's prayer, emphasise that Solomon was given the hard job of being king and asked God to help him.
- **Talk about:** Learning to do things that are hard to do.
- **Wonder:** I wonder why God gives us hard things to do
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for bikes and trikes and for the fun we can have riding them.
- **Bible verse:** Be strong and brave. Don't ever be afraid or discouraged! I am the LORD your God, and I will be there to help you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)

The Post Office

SOMETHING TO BRING: If families have any 'Postman Pat' books or paraphernalia, ask them to bring it along. Understand that there is always a possibility that it will not be returned in pristine condition. We do not actively promote particular media programs, but this one links very well with the theme for the day.

BEFORE THE SESSION: Set up a corner of your space as a post office, with a counter/low table, and a posting box. The box can be as simple as a shoebox with a slot in it. One of the volunteers will act as postmaster in the post office.

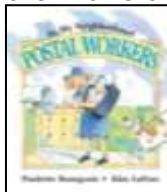
- Prepare a sheet of Playgroup Post stamps by printing on sticky labels.
- Prepare an encouraging note (or friendship card) for each of your adults. Put it in an envelope with the adult's name, and place a Playgroup Post stamp on the envelope.
- Prepare an envelope with the name of each child on it.



ACTIVITY IDEAS

- **Visitor:** Invite a postman or someone who works in a post office tells about how we get our mail.
- ☺ **Letter writing and posting:** Give each child an envelope with the name of another child. They will make a letter or a postcard for that child, but first, adults check to see that they know who the other child is by their name. Carers help children write on a sheet of writing paper 'Dear [name of the child the letter goes to]' at the top and 'Your playgroup friend [name of child writing the letter] at the bottom. Children can then use crayons to scribble, draw and/or write something for the other child. Carer's help their child fold the letter and put it in the envelope. They take the letter to the Post Office where they get a Playgroup Post stamp, put it on the envelope and put it in the posting box. ☺ For younger children they could decorate a post card and the carer could write a message on the back.
- ☺ **Mail call:** Near the end of the session, the 'postmaster' empties the posting box into a bag. When everyone is seated together, the postmaster takes out one envelope at a time and says: 'You've got mail, [Name of child or carer]. Each person stands when their name is called and gets their letter.
- **Stamp sorting:** Collect postage stamps from people who work in businesses/offices. Cut or wash the stamps from the envelopes. Place the stamps in a clear plastic bowl. Children sort through the stamps. They can identify the pictures, sort similar stamps into piles, talk about colours and sizes of stamps. Note: postage stamps are too small for under threes to handle.

STORIES TO SHARE Find stories in your local library or families' collections about post offices or letters, eg



Postal Workers
(My Neighborhood Series, Canada)
by Paulette Bourgeois



Letters from Felix
by Annette Langdon
Contains postage stamps and postmarks from around the world.

SONGS TO SING

- The Post Man Pat theme song. You can find it on U-tube. If you have the equipment, kids can sing along with the video. [This is set in UK and is somewhat different from Australian postal services.
- *A tisket. a tasket, a green and yellow basket*

FAITH ENRICHMENT IDEAS

- **Read or tell:** Long ago people wrote letters and delivered them to their friends and family. We know that a man named Paul wrote many letters to his friends, to tell them about Jesus. We can read the letters Paul wrote in our Bible. Paul wrote about love in one of his letters: 'Love never ends'.
- **Talk about:** how good it is to get letters. We can read from letters in the Bible every day.
- **Wonder:** I wonder who you would like to send a letter about love? . . . about Jesus?
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for letters. For the people who care enough to send them and for the people who bring them to us. Amen.
- **Bible verse:** Love never ends. (1 Corinthians 13:8)

Appendix

Olympic medal



Mothers' Day Card

Have a variety of gift wrap paper cut to approximately A-4 size.

Have some plain paper in colours complementing the gift wrap paper.

You may pre-print the plain paper with the 'U' design or provide adults with a 'U' stencil.

Photocopy this or another Mothers' Day message.

Child chooses the wrapping paper design they prefer for their mum.

Fold the paper in quarters.

Cut out five 'U' shapes of plain paper.

Glue the 'U's on the front of the card to spell out 'mum'.

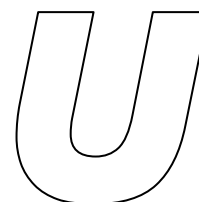
mum

Read the message.

Glue it inside the card.

Help child to sign their name (or put a fingerprint or another mark) on the card.

M is for the many times you've hugged me
U is for unselfish things you do
M is all our memories together
Mum, I'm so glad I have you!



Digger's hat

This is a carer's project with some help from children.

You'll need two pieces of tan A-4 size paper. (To make a larger hat you can use brown parcel-wrapping paper.)

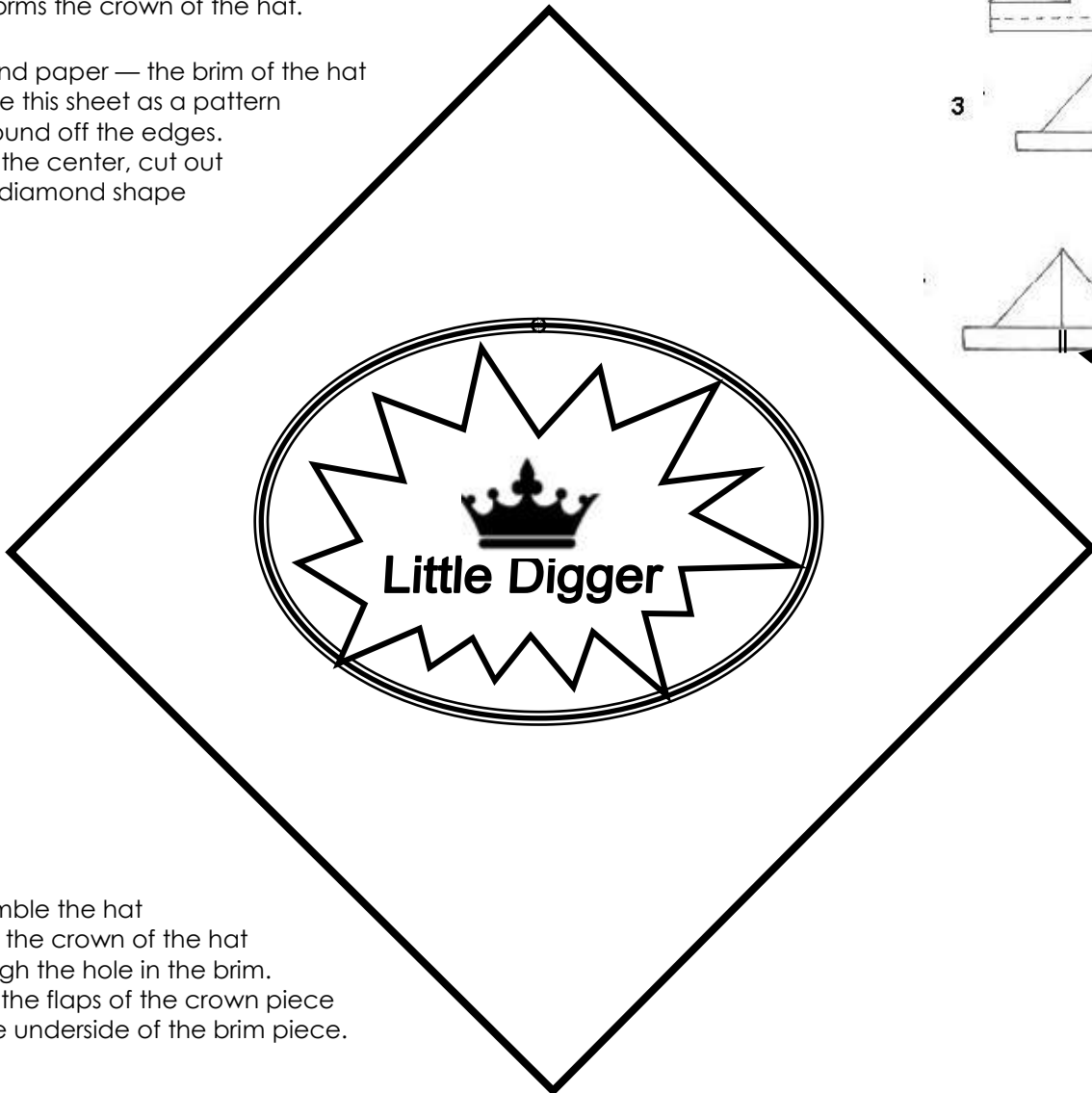
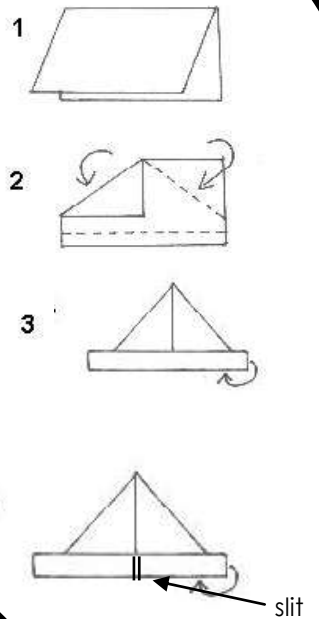
First paper — the crown of the hat

- Fold one paper as you would for a boat or a hat:
- Glue or staple the corner folds so they won't come loose.
- Cut a slit in the centre of the brim on both sides
- Open up the hat to form a diamond shape.

This forms the crown of the hat.

Second paper — the brim of the hat

- Use this sheet as a pattern
Round off the edges.
- In the center, cut out a diamond shape



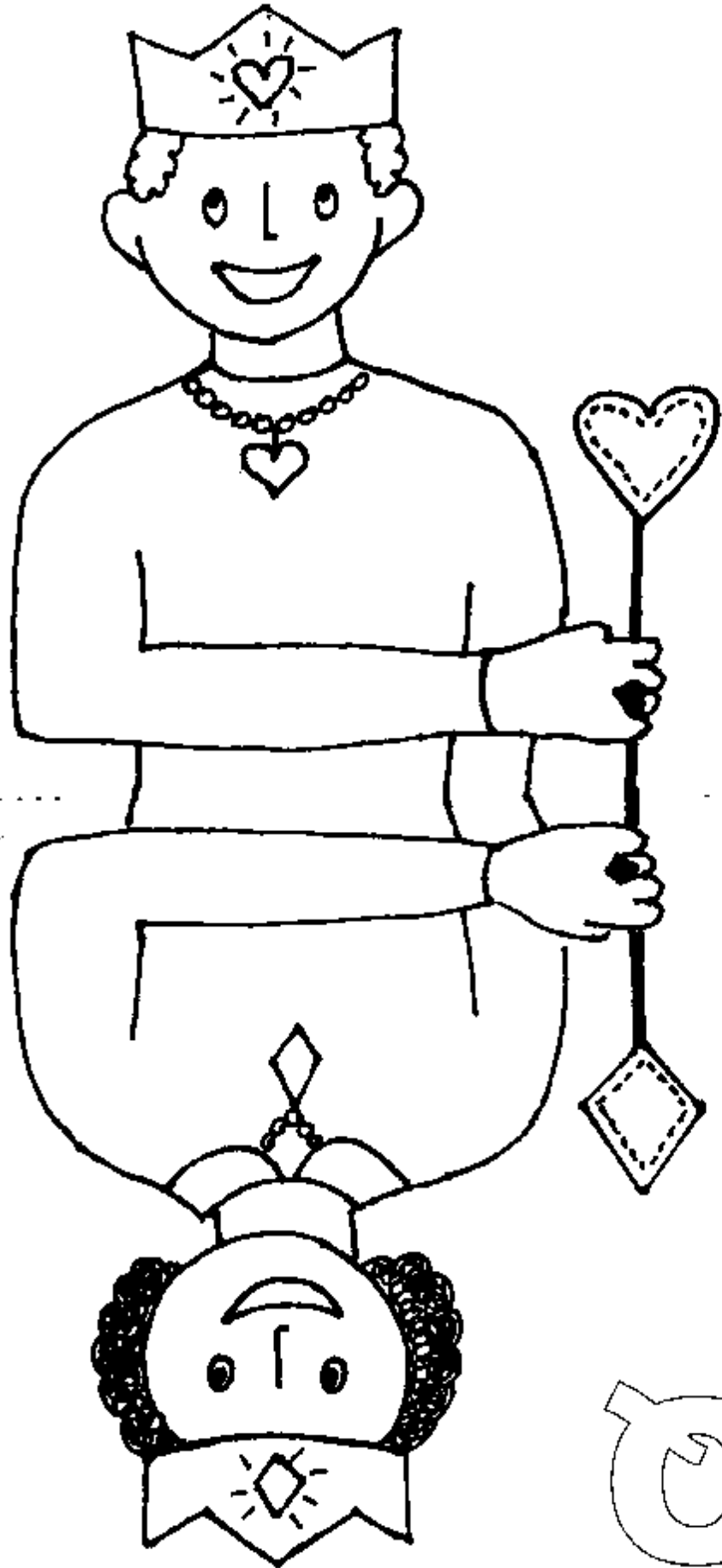
Assemble the hat

Insert the crown of the hat
through the hole in the brim.

Glue the flaps of the crown piece
to the underside of the brim piece.

To give it the 'digger' shape, bend up the left side of the brim.
Staple it to the crown. Decorate by gluing on a medal and/or a feather.

K



Q