



Just Clowning Around

(Target Audience: Preschool or Ages 6-8)

Dress-up articles of clothing, crafts and face paint can round off the program.

This theme can easily be used in a family program.

Stories: If you cannot find a story that is specifically about the circus or clowns, find one with a character that behaves in a comical manner, like a clown.

Notable books on the circus theme are:

Circus Family Dog by Andrew Clements

Olivia Saves the Circus by Ian Falconer

If I Ran the Circus by Dr. Seuss

Poetry: Find a poem or rhyme that has a clown or circus theme and is age appropriate.

Example: "Cloony the Clown" by Shel Silverstein in *Where the Sidewalk Ends: The Poems and Drawings of Shel Silverstein*

Below are some clown rhymes for preschoolers:

Who is it? Mr. Clown!

Who is it that wears a happy smile,
that almost stretches half a mile?
Who is it that turns it upside down,
and changes his smile into a frown?
Who is it that turns his face all around?
Why, who could it be but Mr. Clown?

Five little clowns all in a row,
Wearing funny hats,
And polka-dotted bows.
One little clown hopped away,
Back to the circus to laugh and play.
Four...danced away...
Three...somersaulted...
Two...zoomed...
One...tiptoed...

Songs: Start the program with carnival/circus music and play it again when you start working on the crafts to add a festive atmosphere to the activity.

Circus Song (To the tune *I've been working on the railroad*)

I am walking through the circus
As happy as can be

I am walking through the circus
Just to see what I can see
I can see the clowns laughing
I can see the elephants too
I can see the lion sleeping
Look out – he sees YOU!

Craft Ideas for Dress-Up

Clown costumes

- Use paper plates for making clown faces with markers, crayons and lots of different materials
- Borrow a couple of pairs of large, grown-up shoes for the children to clomp around in
- Make a clown collar using crepe paper or by cutting out the center of a paper plate and decorating
- Make a hat using paper rolled in a cone shape and decorate

Face Painting

Homemade Face Paint: You can find many recipes in craft books or on the Internet. Below are two recipes. Be sure to experiment with the recipes before the day of the program.

Recipe 1

- Small jars or plastic containers
- Paint brushes
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) cornstarch per container
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) cold cream per container
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) water per container
- 3 to 4 drops of food colouring

Mix ingredients together in the containers and paint clown faces on the children. The paint will wash off with soap and water.

Recipe 2

- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) shortening
- 5 teaspoons (25 ml) cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon flour
- Dab of Vaseline
- Add food colouring for various colours

Blend together on a paper plate and apply with brushes

Clown Snacks

Have the children create their own clown faces made out of bread. Cut pieces of bread in a circle shape using a small round bowl or cookie cutter to press out the shape and decorate with raisins, carrots, tomato noses, peppers, etc. Hats can be made out of triangle-shaped pieces of bread or cheese.