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# 1

## Beginnings

## Lesson 1, Part 1


### Theme: Welcome to preschool.

#### Purpose:

- to help the children experience their new group as a warm, welcoming community of friends.



#### Beginning

 Have a tree attached to the wall or bulletin board at the children's eye level as suggested in the lesson for the *Unit Page*. Attach Sudie Squirrel to the tree. Prepare an acorn for each child with his or her name on it. As each child enters the preschool room, welcome him or her. After the children come in, help them find the acorns with their names on them and attach the acorns to the tree. Have additional acorns with the children's names on them and pin these on the children to help you learn their names. Appropriate toys such as puzzles, large snap-together blocks, books, play-dough, and so on, should be out on the tables for the children to play with as they arrive.

Gather the children in a circle or group. Take Sudie Squirrel from the tree and introduce her to the group. As you do this, have each child tell Sudie Squirrel his or her name.

Explain in these or similar words: "This year we will do many exciting things together. We are going to learn about God and God's love for us. We will learn about God's only Son, Jesus, who is our friend. We will play games, sing songs, and listen to stories. We will all become friends."

#### Middle

Show *Activity Page 3* to the children. Read aloud the message at the

top of the page. Ask the children to look at the faces in the picture. Tell them that these four children, Peter, Lorrie, Brenda, and Carlos, are going to be some of our new friends this year in preschool.

Have the children find the face that is blank in the picture. Invite them to make their own faces in the blank space by drawing in their own eyes, noses, mouths, and hair. Ask the children the name of the preschool. Print this on their circles for them.

#### End

Teach the children the following song:


#### Making Friends (To the tune of "London Bridge")

I can make a brand new friend,  
Brand new friend,  
Brand new friend.  
I can make a brand new friend  
In my preschool.

Provide Sudie Squirrel with a basket of acorns. Have Sudie Squirrel explain that acorns are her favorite food and that she would like to share these with her new friends. Have Sudie Squirrel call each child by name to come up and get an acorn. Lead the children in singing the following, inserting each name.

#### (Child's name) is my brand new friend,

Brand new friend.  
Brand new friend.  
I have made a brand new friend  
In my preschool.

 Tell the children that before we leave, we want to remember that God loves us and gives us Jesus and our new friends. Help the children fold their hands to pray. End by saying the following prayer: "Thank you, God for our new friends. Amen."

# Extra! Extra!



## Handprint Acorns

Have the children make handprint acorns to present to Sudie Squirrel as a gift for the group's tree. Trace each child's hand, with fingers together, on dark brown construction paper and cut out. Trace each child's hand, with fingers together, on light brown construction paper and cut out. Place the light brown handprint on the table with fingers pointed down. Place the dark brown handprint with fingers pointed to the side across the top of the light brown handprint and secure with glue. Add a stem using a twig or a piece of dark brown construction paper.

Have each child come one at a time and give Sudie Squirrel his or her acorn. Help Sudie Squirrel hang these acorns on the tree.



Have the children bring their teddy bears to school (or provide two stuffed bears for this activity). Read the book *My Friend Bear* by Jez Alborough to the children. Group the children in pairs. Encourage the children to talk to their partners through their teddy bears just like the great big bear and Eddie did in the story.



## Materials for Part 2:

- Activity Page 4
- masking tape
- construction paper acorns

## Beginnings (Part 2)

### Theme: What will preschool be like?

#### Purpose:

- to encourage the children to look forward to all the things they will do and learn in preschool.

#### Beginning



As the children enter the room, have Sudie Squirrel welcome them. Then help the children find the acorns with their names on them and place them on the tree.

Using masking tape, make an outline of a large tree on the floor. Have the children sit in the top of the tree and pretend to be acorns. Give Sudie Squirrel a basket with the acorn nametags in it. Help Sudie Squirrel pull a nametag out and sing (to the tune of "London Bridge"):



(Child's name) is my brand new friend,  
Brand new friend,  
Brand new friend.  
(Child's name) is my brand new friend.  
Where are you?

Have the child called come up. Sudie Squirrel attaches the nametag to the child and the child returns to his or her place. Continue until all the children have had a turn.



#### Middle

Pass out *Activity Page 4* to each child. Read the words at the top of the page aloud. Draw the children's attention to the three individual pictures of the children learning new things at preschool.

Begin with the little girl sliding down the slide. Have the children pretend to slide down the slide. Continue in this way with each of the pictures. Have the children mark the pictures of things that they want to do in preschool.

#### End

Ahead of time, prepare several construction paper acorns. Place these in areas around the room and the building that the children need to become familiar with, such as the prayer corner, the book center, the art center, the playground area, the restrooms, and so on.

Take the children on an acorn hunt to help Sudie Squirrel fill her basket with acorns. Sing the following song as you hunt for acorns:



#### A-Hunting We Will Go

A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go.  
To find acorns for Sudie Squirrel,  
A-hunting we will go.

Lead the children around the room looking for acorns. As each acorn is found, talk about that area of the preschool room.



Gather the children in the prayer corner. Place the basket of acorns on the prayer table. Conclude by leading the children in the prayer found on the bottom of *Activity Page 4*.



## Extra! Extra!



### The Year-End Scrapbook

Make a scrapbook for each child to be added to throughout the year. Take a picture of each child with Sudie Squirrel. Mount this on a piece of construction paper. Write the date and the words, "Sudie Squirrel is my brand new friend in my preschool."

Save these pages in a separate folder for each child. At the end of the year, bind together all the pages you have saved in the folder.



### Materials for Part 3:

- Read to Me Page 5
- dried lima beans
- brown paint and sponges
- construction paper or tagboard

# Beginnings (Part 3)

**Theme: We can make new friends in preschool.**

## Purpose:

- to affirm the children's responses as they experience belonging to a preschool group.

## Beginning



As the children enter the room, have Sudie Squirrel welcome them. Then help the children find the acorns with their names on them and place them on the tree.

Have the children gather around the tree taped on the floor, being careful not to sit on the tree. Have Sudie Squirrel bring out the basket with the acorn nametags for the children. Sing the "Making Friends" song found on page 16 with the children. Then have Sudie Squirrel pull a nametag from the basket and sing the following verse (to the tune of "London Bridge") using that child's name:



(Child's name) will you be my friend?

Be my friend?

Be my friend?

(Child's name) will you be my friend

In my preschool?

The child called comes forward and Sudie Squirrel places the nametag on him or her. Then the child finds a place to sit inside

the masking tape tree. Continue in this way until all the children have had a turn and are sitting in the tree. Explain to the children that we have made a friendship tree, and we are all friends in our preschool.

## Middle

Pass out *Read to Me Page 5*. Draw the children's attention to all the familiar faces surrounding the story. Tell the children that this is a story about Lorrie and her first day at preschool. Ask the children what they remember about their first day at preschool. What was the best thing that happened to them on that day?

Tell the children to listen as you read the story to find out what Lorrie liked about being in preschool. When you are finished reading, take time to ask and talk about the questions at the bottom of this page.

## End

Make "Preschool Friendship Trees." Ahead of time, spray dried lima beans with brown paint. Draw a tree on a piece of construction paper or tagboard for each child. Help the children sponge paint fall colors on the top of the tree and paint the bottom of the tree brown. Give each child enough painted beans to represent one for each child in the group. Explain that these are the acorns that we will put in our trees. Help the children glue the beans to their trees. When dry, write the names of each child in the group, one next to each bean.



Gather the children around the prayer table. Have each child bring up one painted acorn (lima bean) and place in a small basket on the prayer table. Then lead the children in the following prayer: "Dear God, thank you for all our new friends in preschool. Amen."



## Extra! Extra!

### A Tree of Acorns

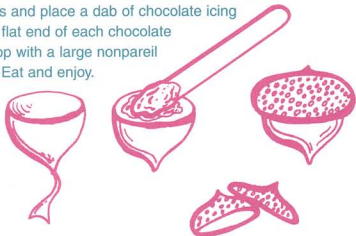
Take a brown paper bag and sponge paint the bottom part with fall colors. Fill the bag with enough chocolate kisses for each child to have two. Twist the top of the bag closed and hold the bag upside down to form a tree. Tell the children that there are "acorns" inside this tree. Have the children gather in a circle. Say the following poem:

Little acorns in the tree  
All together will we see  
Tumbling, tumbling to the ground.  
Look at the acorns that I've found!

As you are saying the poem, slowly untwist the bag and let the chocolate kisses fall out. Encourage the children to gather as many as they can. When all the candies have been picked up, have the children go to their places and count how many they have. If a child has more than two candies, have that child find someone to share with who does not have two.



Before eating the candies, have the children make them into acorns. Have the children unwrap their candies and place a dab of chocolate icing on the flat end of each chocolate kiss. Top with a large nonpareil candy. Eat and enjoy.



### Materials for Lesson 2, Part 1:

- Activity Page 7
- gift box or bag
- block, paintbrush, and a book

**Theme:** New friends belong together in our preschool.

**Purpose:**

- to encourage the children's efforts in making new friends.

**Beginning**



As the children enter the room, have Sudie Squirrel welcome them. Then help the children find the acorns with their names on them and place them on the tree.

Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Have a decorated box or gift bag with a block, a paintbrush, and a book in it. Explain to the children that in this box or bag are things that we share in our preschool. Invite one child to come up and pull something out of the box or bag. Then have this child pick a friend to come up and show how the two of them will share this object at preschool. Continue with each object.



**Middle**

Pass out *Activity Page 7* to each child. Read the message at the top of the page to the children. Have the children look at the pictures of the children participating in preschool activities. Talk about what each child is doing. Ask the children whether they can do these things. Then have the children color the picture, making the children in the picture look like some of their new friends.

**End**

Teach "The Sharing Song" to the children.



**The Sharing Song**  
(To the tune of "Frère Jacques")

Take your turn now.

Take your turn now.

I'll take mine.

I'll take mine.

When we work together,

When we play together,

Sharing's fun!

Sharing's fun!

Have the children practice sharing in their preschool group. Provide books, blocks, and other toys for the children to play with freely, encouraging the children to share with their friends. As the children are playing, have Sudie Squirrel go around the room and participate with the children as they play and share.



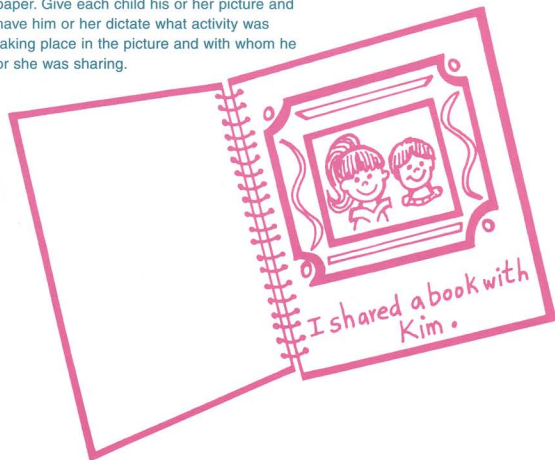
Gather the children around the prayer table. Have each child bring one thing that he or she shared while playing and place this on the prayer table. Conclude with the prayer found on the bottom of *Activity Page 7*.

# Extra! Extra!



### The Year-End Scrapbook

Add a page to each child's scrapbook. While the children are playing together, take pictures, being sure to get at least one picture for each child. Mount these pictures on construction paper. Give each child his or her picture and have him or her dictate what activity was taking place in the picture and with whom he or she was sharing.



Read the book *Best Friends Sleep Over* by Jacqueline Rogers. Tell the children that sometimes when we come to preschool, we don't want to leave our parents, but at preschool we have lots of friends who love us and will share with us.



### Materials for Part 2:

- Activity Page 8
- small mirrors
- tagboard
- foil
- colored pasta

## Belonging (Part 2)

**Theme:** Each of us is special to God.

### Purpose:

- to affirm the uniqueness of each child as made and loved by God.

### Beginning



As the children enter the room, have Sudie Squirrel welcome them. Then help the children find the acorns with their names on them and place them on the tree.

Use the box or bag from Lesson 2, Part 1, but put small mirrors in the box or bag. Include enough for each child in the group to have one. Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Show them the box or bag that you have prepared. Remind the children that in the previous lesson this box or bag contained things in our preschool that we shared. Tell the children that inside the box or bag are more things that we are going to share at preschool. Call each child up to pull something from the box or bag. As each child pulls a mirror from the box or bag, have the child look in the mirror and tell what he or she sees. Then explain that each of us is very special. God made us all and he wants us to share ourselves with one another.



### Middle

Pass out a copy of *Activity Page 8* to each child. Draw the children's attention to the two children looking in the mirror. Ask what these children might be seeing. Read the message at the top of the page to the children.

Have the children imagine that they are standing in front of the big mirror. Who will they see in it? Encourage the children to draw themselves in the large mirror. Allow the children to use the small mirrors from the **Beginning** section to look at themselves when drawing. When the pictures are complete, have each child show his or her picture to the group and say one thing that is special about himself or herself.

### End



Help the children make individual mirrors. For each child, provide a piece of tagboard cut into the shape of a hand-held mirror. Provide a circle of foil for each child. Show the children how to glue the foil to the center of the tagboard to make a mirror. Provide variously shaped colored pasta for the children to glue on their mirrors for decoration.



Sing "The Sharing Song" found on page 22 with the children.



Gather the children around the prayer table. Lead them in the following prayer: "Dear God, thank you for making me special. Amen."



# Extra! Extra!



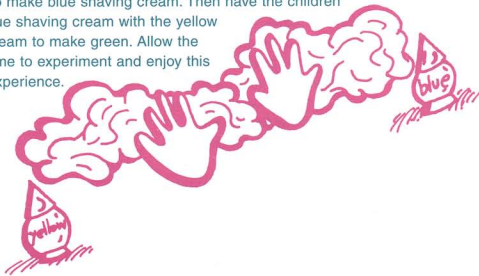
Explain that each of us is special and by sharing with others our preschool room becomes a unique place.

Read the story *Little Blue and Little Yellow: A Story for Pippo and Other Children* by Leo Lionni.



## Making Green

Have the children sit at their tables. Give each child two small squirts of shaving cream. To one of the squirts of shaving cream add a small amount of yellow finger paint and have the children mix this together to make yellow shaving cream. To the other squirt of shaving cream, add a small amount of blue finger paint, and have the children mix this together to make blue shaving cream. Then have the children mix the blue shaving cream with the yellow shaving cream to make green. Allow the children time to experiment and enjoy this sensory experience.



## Materials for Part 3:

- Read to Me Page 9
- small zippered plastic bags
- chocolate chips, small marshmallows, candy-coated chocolates, and checkerboard cereal
- large bowl
- craft foam
- brown paint
- permanent marker




## Belonging (Part 3)


**Theme: We learn to get along with others.**

### Purpose:

- to encourage the development of social skills as early learning for moral growth.

### Beginning

 As the children enter the room, have Sudie Squirrel welcome them. Then help the children find the acorns with their names on them and place them on the tree.

 Ahead of time, prepare the box or bag used previously. Fill small zippered plastic bags with separate ingredients for a friendship mix, such as chocolates, small marshmallows, candy-coated chocolate candies, checkerboard cereal, and so on. Have enough bags so each child will get one. Place these bags inside the box or bag. Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Show the box or bag and explain that this box or bag again contains something that we will be sharing. Let each child come up and pull something from the box or bag. After each child has had a turn, ask the children how we can share these bags of treats. Help the children come to the conclusion that if we mix them all together, we can make a friendship mix to share. Then let each child come and empty his or her bag of treats into a large bowl. Mix together and save for the end of the session.




### Middle

Pass out *Read to Me Page 9* to the children. Have the children look at the pictures around the page and tell what the people in the pictures are doing. Encourage them to listen carefully as you read. As you read each verse, encourage the children to point to the illustration that goes with that verse. Ask them whether they are learning some of these same things in preschool.


### End

 Give each child some friendship mix to enjoy.



 Make a frame for a preschool group picture. Cut a rectangular shape from a piece of craft foam. Cut out the middle to make a picture frame. Have each child put a brown painted thumbprint around the frame. Use a permanent marker to add features to make these thumbprints into acorns. Write each child's name near his or her thumbprint acorn. Place a picture of the group in the frame.



 Gather the children around the prayer table. Place the group picture in the frame on the prayer table. Pray together: "Dear God, thank you for helping us to share. Amen."

## Extra! Extra!



Read the book *It's Mine* by Leo Lionni to the children. Talk about getting along and how it is more fun to do things together.

### Leap Along with Me

Explain that some things cannot be done alone. Play leapfrog with the children (a game that cannot be played alone). Show the children how to get in a line and crouch down low like frogs. Then help the child who is last in line to hop over the other children beginning from the back of the line. Then have this child get in the front of the line and crouch down like a frog. Continue with the child who is now last in the line. Be sure to let all the children have a turn "leaping."



### Materials for Lesson 3, Part 1:

- Activity Page 11
- poster of hands
- magazines
- glue stick
- white bulletin board paper
- paint