



# Activity Plan

## 1. Activity name

Playdough (birthday time)

## 2. Materials

Playdough of different colors  
Birthday candles  
Small plastic plates  
Butter knives  
Birthday crown  
Large, round cookie cutters  
Container for utensils  
Vinyl place mats for each child  
Puppet  
Long, rectangular table  
Rolling pins  
Bucket with several damp sponges  
Broom and dust pan

## 3. Environmental arrangement

Each child is given a place mat to define his or her area for using playdough at the table. Name cards are placed at the table for seating arrangements. One interventionist should be seated at the table with the children. This activity should take place away from other activities because children will be singing and talking throughout. Select a puppet of high interest to children or one that fits in with the theme of the week/month.

## 4. Sequence of steps

### Beginning

The interventionist announces, "I have a puppet friend who is 4 years old today. Who would like to help me give my friend a birthday party? What do children like to eat on their birthdays?" The interventionist then asks the children which kind of cake they like. The interventionist tells the children that the art table has playdough and utensils for making a pretend cake for the puppet.

### Middle

The children select the color of playdough that they want to use for making the cake. The children use utensils as desired by requesting them from peers/interventionist. The children place candles on the cake. The children sing "Happy Birthday" to the puppet. The children repeat the above steps.

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## End

The interventionist gives a 5-minute warning to signal the closing of the activity. The interventionist suggests that the children do one last thing to their cakes before they return the playdough to its container. The children return playdough utensils to basket. The children take a sponge from the bucket and wipe the table where they were using playdough. The children move to the next activity.

## 5. Embedded learning opportunities

Learns/practices fine motor skills

Holds playdough with one hand while the other hand manipulates it

Uses each hand to manipulate playdough, each hand performing a different movement

Learns/practices cognitive skills

Demonstrates understanding of colors by requesting specific playdough color

Follows directions that are not routinely given

Identifies a favorite kind of cake

Learns/practices social-communication skills

Uses words, phrases, or sentences to inform

Uses words, phrases, or sentences to make commands and requests of peers

Uses words, phrases, or sentences to describe birthday cake

Learns/practices social skills

Responds to request to begin/finish activity

Responds appropriately to directions

Takes turns using utensils with others

Shares or exchanges objects

Remains with group during the activity

## 6. Planned variations

1. The children make playdough cookies for a Cookie Monster puppet. The children should be given cookie sheets instead of place mats to make the cookies.

2. The children make playdough to take home.

3. Different textures can be added to the playdough such as cornmeal, coarse salt, and party confetti.

## 7. Vocabulary

Colors (yellow, pink, green, orange, brown)

Name of puppet

Words of "Happy Birthday" song

Prepositions (beside, next to, on)

Utensils and materials (knife, rolling pin, sponge, plate, place mat, cookie cutter)

Numbers 1–4

Directions (cut, blow out, share)

Peers' names

Flavors (strawberry, chocolate, lemon, orange, vanilla)

## **8. Peer interaction opportunities**

*The interventionist places name cards at the activity table prior to the children's arrival to ensure that particular children sit near one another to increase social communication between children.*

*The interventionist encourages children to cut their cakes and to serve them to their peers.*

## **9. Caregiver involvement**

*Caregiver could share different cultural ways of celebrating birthdays.*

*Children celebrate their birthdays in the classroom with peers. Parents/caregiver provide a special treat for snack.*

*Caregiver could provide materials for the activity, such as playdough and utensils.*

*Caregiver could observe activity and collect data on children.*

*Children visit a bakery and observe the baker decorating a cake.*

*Caregivers could complete a questionnaire on the success of the activity based on observation or discussion with their children.*