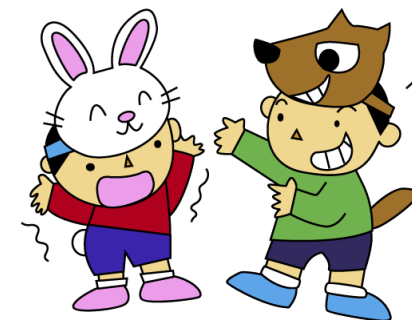


Supporting Expressive Arts and Design at home

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) is one of four Specific areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and covers the development of children's artistic and cultural awareness, supporting their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.



Expressive Arts and Design is an opportunity for children to explore their creativity in an environment where they won't be tested on their skills or choice of technique. It creates opportunities to experiment and have fun! Participating in drawing or crafts with a large choice of materials and no strict guidelines will allow children to build confidence in their own creativity.

Benefits of Expressive Arts and Design to children:

- Develop a more creative outlook.
- Exposure to different materials, media and sounds, amongst other things.
- Helps to build confidence in their own ideas.
- Presents an opportunity to practice teamwork and collaborative working.

Using their self-expression helps children to really begin to understand new concepts and demonstrate what this means to them personally. At school, we work hard to create a diverse, creative learning environment which encourages children to explore traditions, religions, cultures and festivals which differ to their own.

Expressive Arts and Design doesn't just include painting, drawing and crafts - it also includes drama, role-play, dance and music. These aspects of EAD are equally important and will help children explore other areas of creativity and help boost their confidence.



What can you do at home?

Rather than a list of must-do activities, you can dip in and out of these prompts and ideas based on your child's current interests and appropriate stage of development.

Creating with materials

- Provide a range of resources that can be used for making marks, e.g. pencils, felt-tips, paint and chalk. Provide a range of materials, e.g. feathers, paper, soil, sand or shaving foam.
- Use available materials like fabrics, recyclable materials, boxes, tubes, cartons, bottle tops, card and paper with a range of separating and joining tools, e.g. scissors, string and glue to make models. Sit on your hands and resist the temptation to take over!
- Allow children time, space and freedom to explore different malleable materials like playdough, cornflour, custard powder, sand and mud. First use these materials without tools in order for children to understand their properties and provide opportunities to construct and design using materials without tools by squeezing, pressing, pulling, rolling, pinching, poking, stretching, tearing and moulding etc. Then at another time, use these materials with tools. Allow children to observe you using and exploring available tools so they can make choices about what to use and when.
- Provide opportunities for painting with different sized brushes on different sized paper and using other materials and techniques such as:
 - String painting and butterfly prints – add string to the paint, pull out and place on the paper.
 - Make patterns and shapes, fold the paper to make a symmetrical pattern.
 - Hand and feet printing.
 - Fruit and vegetable printing.
 - Bubble painting – add washing up liquid to the paint and the children can blow coloured bubbles using straws and capture this on paper.
- Provide natural objects and materials such as feathers, shells, leaves, ice, mini-beasts, plants and seeds for children to touch, explore, talk about and draw.
- Encourage your child to see what happens when they mix coloured paints - start with red, blue and yellow and go from there.

Being imaginative and expressive

- Play a variety of music at home from classical to pop.
- Sing familiar nursery rhymes and songs and introduce new ones.
- Play sounds from around the world.
- Move, clap and dance to music.
- Still need an excuse to have a kitchen disco? You are helping your child to learn... so go for it!
- Provide resources for children to play imaginatively with small figures, animals and resources that extend imaginative play and creative thought.
- Encourage your child to use their interests to create imaginary spaces like dens which can become homes or caves and small world resources like water toys which can lead to pretend underwater spaces being created.
- Encourage children to create their own stories and tell these to you to scribe, then act these out together. Over time, repeating this activity regularly can lead to children telling complex stories, acting these out and eventually, wanting to write their own stories.
- Tell your child stories and rhymes from your head without using a book. These could be introduced in a range of ways, including traditional and modern stories as well as made up songs and stories.
- Allow your child to experience performance by staging made up productions of stories, puppet shows and dance. This doesn't have to be fancy - just let loose, follow your child's lead and have fun!
- When possible, organise days out to art galleries, theatres, libraries, dance shows or the cinema.
- Introduce simple instruments into your home, e.g. drums, recorders or keyboards. These can even be made from household objects - an empty ice-cream container turned upside down is a great percussion instrument!