

### Activity Ideas

#### 1. Choose an instrument you can play

##### Learning Outcomes

- play cooperatively, take turns and share resources
- express preferences appropriately
- become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of others

We will know we have been successful if we

- give everyone in the group a turn.
- all have different favourite instruments and that makes it all the more fun to play together.

##### Resources required




- a range of percussion instruments - one per child and adult in the group.
- blank chart as shown.
- glue, sellotape or blu tac
- pencils
- an object to be passed around the circle.
- pictures of each instrument - several of each, e.g.



##### Time required

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

## Activity Ideas

People who chose the instruments	3			
	2			
	1			
	0	<b>Drums</b> 	<b>Castanets</b> 	<b>Tambourine</b> 
<b>Instruments</b>				

### Method

All children and adults participating in the game sit in a circle with the instruments in the centre. Assure the children that everyone will get a turn, and until it's your turn gently pass the object around the circle.

Sing to the tune of 'London Bridge is Falling Down' as we pass round an item in the manner of pass the parcel.

*Choose an instrument you can play,*

*You can play, you can play,*

*Choose an instrument you can play,*

*What's your favourite?*


The person who is holding the object when the song finishes chooses their favourite instrument. Name the instrument and the child - 'Yasmin has chosen the castanets.' Sing to the same tune:-

**Activity Ideas**

*Yasmin plays the castanets,  
castanets, castanets  
Yasmin plays the castanets,  
That's her favourite.*

Each child should be given a turn. If the object lands on someone who has already had a turn it should be passed on to the next person who has not yet had a turn - giving the adult an opportunity to praise turn-taking. As each child returns their instrument to the centre of the circle there is time to comment on who chose the same instrument and who chose a different instrument - 'even though you chose different instruments they both sounded really beautiful.'

Let each child select the picture of the instrument they had played. Support attempts to write their names on the pictures and find the appropriate place to put it on the graph.

	3			
	2	 Yasmin		
	1	 Tom		
		<b>Drums</b> 	<b>Castanets</b> 	<b>Tambourine</b> 
<b>Instruments</b>				

### Activity Ideas

Look at the graph that has been produced counting how many people chose each instrument. Suggest that 'if we all chose the same instrument the game would be really boring, wouldn't it? Lets all play together!'

Allow every child to choose an instrument. (Encourage the children to choose a different instrument this time because they all sound so good - everyone is so good at playing the different instruments!) This time sing 'We all play the instruments...', praising how great it sounds when everyone plays together.

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Have the musical instruments available with the appropriate matching pictures and blank table. It is useful for discussion to display a completed graph to allow children to talk about changed favourites.

### Activity Ideas

#### 2. This is the way we share our toys

##### Learning Outcomes

- play cooperatively, take turns and share resources
- express preferences appropriately

We will know we have been successful if we

- take turns and share with all of the children.

##### Resources required

- A range of small toys that are best played with friends - enough parts of each toy for each child in the group.

##### Time required

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

##### Method

Seated in a circle on the floor or around a table, talk about the importance of sharing, and that we don't just share with our very best friends - we share with everyone, even if we don't know them very well. Explain that we are going to play a game about sharing, and that it starts with a song.

Sing:

*This is the way we share our toys*

*Share our toys, share our toys*

*This is the way we share our toys*

*At nursery with our friends*

*to the tune of 'Here we go round the Mulberry bush')*

### Activity Ideas

Show the children the range of toys available for the game and, assuring them that everyone will get a turn, ask one child to choose a toy. Give her/him enough toys of that type. Explain that while we sing, the child with the toys will share them out with all of her / his friends. Substitute the type of toy into the words of the song and ensure that the child distributes toys to all children in the group.

*This is the way we share our cars,  
Share our cars, share our cars,  
This is the way we share our cars,  
At nursery with our friends.*

Praise the child for sharing with all of the other children in the group. Make a point of saying that you know not everyone in the group is her/his very best friend but that they have still remembered to share with every child. Play with the toys together, emphasising sharing. Ask if anyone would like a turn of your car; thank them for swapping with you. Say how much fun you had playing with the cars together and gather them in.

Allow each child in the group to choose a type of toy to share in the same way. Just about any toy could be used here. Construction materials and arts and crafts materials work well. It's also quite quick and easy to share out jigsaw pieces and complete that together.

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Take a photo of a tower built together in one of these sessions and display it in the construction area with a caption emphasising how well everyone can do when we work together.

Display pictures drawn together.

### Activity Ideas

Encourage collaborative drawing, painting and collage work by providing resources such as A3 paper and large boxes that are easier for several children to work on simultaneously. It's an opportunity to emphasise how much we can do when we work together - for example, we made an enormous Chinese dragon together and performed a dragon dance. Children were very proud of this and realised no-one could have done all by themselves.

### Activity Ideas

#### 3. Fruit

##### Learning Outcomes

- play cooperatively, take turns and share resources
- express preferences appropriately
- become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of others

We will know we have been successful if we

- take turns and share
- understand that we do not all like the same things but the things we like are similar





##### Resources required

- A selection of fruit cut into bite-sized pieces
- Cards with pictures of each fruit - multiple copies of each. e.g.



### Activity Ideas

Graph as shown

NUMBER OF PEOPLE	4				
	3				
	2				
	1				
					
	Strawberries	Grapes	Apples	Melon	
<b>Favourite Fruit</b>					

Choose fruits from a range of different countries, including some fruits that children are less likely to have seen or tasted, and you will have a further multicultural opportunity.

#### Time required

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

#### Method

Sit in a circle, either on chairs or on mats that define the space for each child. Tell each child the name of a fruit by alternately saying 'apple' or 'orange' around the circle. With children who have not played this kind of game before, two types of fruit are sufficient but more could be added with practice. Ensure that each child knows which fruit s/he has been allocated. Explain that when you say 'apple', all of the children who are apples must stand up and try to quickly find another seat and when you say 'orange', all of the children who are oranges must stand up and try to quickly find another seat. If you say 'fruit salad', all of the children change seats. If the children are familiar with this kind of game then one seat can be removed, so that in each turn someone will remain standing and will have a turn to call out 'apple', 'orange', or 'fruit salad'.

### Activity Ideas

Explain that we are all going to taste some different kinds of fruit and choose which ones are our favourites. Pass around the first fruit to be tasted, praising children for taking a piece and passing the bowl to the next person, sharing kindly. Discuss the taste, colour and texture of the fruit. Repeat with each type of fruit. Ask each child to say which fruit was their favourite and to select a picture of that fruit. Discuss as each child takes their turn who they have chosen the same as and who they have chosen differently from. To add an extra literacy opportunity, and because children frequently look at the completed graph and want to know which one is theirs, ask children to write their name on the picture they choose.

Place the pictures in the appropriate places on the graph and discuss what the graph tells us. Explain that although we have different favourites, we all like fruits that are tasty and good for our bodies.

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Display graph at snack table as a stimulus for discussion.

As children become increasingly familiar with interpreting information from graphs, it would be possible to create similar graphs on a variety of subjects, e.g.:

- eye colour
- hair colour
- football teams supported
- if you got to Sunday school / church / chapel / mosque / synagogue / none

### Activity Ideas

#### 4. Circle time with a Persona Doll - 'Someone would not play with me'

##### Learning Outcomes

- develop positive attitudes towards others whose gender, language, religion or culture, for example, are different from their own.
- form positive relationships with other children and adults.
- become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of others.
- play cooperatively, take turns and share resources.

We will know we have been successful if we

- understand that we can do things that make people sad or that make people happy.
- decide to let everyone play in our games.

##### Resources required

- Persona Doll (or a puppet)
- A 'talking object' to be passed around the circle.
- Stickers

##### Time required

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

##### Method

Sit together in a circle.

Introduce the doll or puppet to the children and explain that s/he is sad.

### Activity Ideas

Ask the children what makes them sad and pass around the talking object to allow each child a turn to answer.

Explain that the reason why the doll is sad is that someone refused to play with her / him. The reason could be simply that the other children didn't know her/him or you could make up a scenario that reflects current divisions within your setting.

Ask the children what the doll should do when someone won't play with him or her. When I do this, there is invariably one child who says they'd hit the other child or grab the toys off them. By using the doll, it's possible to avoid having to say that that's not acceptable behaviour. I pretend the doll is whispering to me, then explain that s/he has tried that, but the other children still didn't want to play with her/him. Repeat the ideas back about what might be good ways to get to play together, as if you're explaining to the doll: 'Did you hear that ...(name)? The children think that you could try asking nicely, or invite them to do something different, or tell a grown up (etc.) and I think they're all brilliant ideas. What do you think?' Pretend the doll is speaking to you again then tell the children that s/he will try all of those things and thinks that s/he would like to be friends with them, would they like that?

Ask the children, in a round, for ideas of what we can do to make other people happy, praising their suggestions.

### Activity Ideas

Tell the children that they are all so good at being kind to other people and sharing that you would like to share your stickers with them. As you give a sticker to each child try to say something positive and personal, such as 'I liked your idea about showing new boys and girls where to find the pinnys so they can play in the water with you' or 'I'm sure that helping your Mummy and Daddy clear the table will make them happy, good thinking.'

During play, ensure that you reinforce this by highlighting and praising children when you see them sharing, taking turns or doing kind and helpful things for other people.

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Put the doll / puppet in the nursery - at a different activity each day to encourage the children to play with her / him.

The doll could be given to children who are needing help to make friends.

Encourage the children to take turns to take the doll / puppet home. You might try giving them a disposable camera to take home with them to enable you to make an album showing the doll playing with each child and their families.

#### **Books about Circle Time in the Early Years**

Mosley, J (1996) *Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom*, LDA, Cambridge

Collins, M (2001) *Circle Time for the Very Young*, Lucky Duck Publishing, Bristol

### Activity Ideas

**To find out more about Persona Dolls** and to see comments from other teachers who have used Persona Dolls, click [here](#).

For more ideas about how to use Persona Dolls, obtain a copy of 'The Little Book of Persona Dolls' by Marilyn Bowles. This book, written by Headteacher Marilyn Bowles from Leicester, is packed with advice and ideas for all those working with children in the early years. There are superb ideas in the book for multicultural and interfaith work. It will help in promoting positive attitudes and images of different religions and beliefs. With creativity, you should be able to bring forward issues of Catholic / Protestant, Christian / Muslim, religious / secular and so on.

To purchase a copy contact:

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### Activity Ideas

#### 5. Our Families

##### Learning Outcomes

- develop confidence, self-esteem and a sense of security.
- develop positive attitudes towards others whose gender, language, religion or culture, for example, are different from their own.
- form positive relationships with other children and adults.
- become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of others.

We will know we have been successful if we

- understand that all families are different but they are all special.

##### Resources required

- A book depicting a nuclear family.

##### Time required

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

##### Method

Read the book then say that not all families are like the family in that story. Talk about similarities and differences as you ask each child who is in their family. Highlight that not all families have the same number of people in them, not all families have mums, not all families have dads, some have two mums or two dads, some have aunts, uncles, grandparents, some have sisters and brothers who have a different mum or dad, or who don't live in the same house as them and some families look different too. 'So Much' depicts a black extended family and focuses on each member of the family arriving at the house for a party, each person saying about the different ways in which they love the baby so much.

### Activity Ideas

It is a wonderful story to promote discussion about similarities and differences between families, enabling the reader to highlight that even though our families can be very different, they all love the members of their family. The discussion could be extended into a circle time about what you do with your family, e.g. sports, worshipping, helping out around the house.

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Books depicting people from a wide range of family backgrounds should always be readily available to all children in the story corner. The books on offer, and posters throughout the nursery should reflect our diverse society and depict people of a broad range of ethnic origins, genders, abilities, sexual orientations, ages in positive, non-stereotypical roles. The specific books used in an adult led activity will be revisited by the children if they are made available in the book corner. All staff should be encouraged to discuss similarities and differences on an ad hoc basis.

Add the book Elmer the Patchwork Elephant to the story corner to generate further discussion about similarities and differences.

Invite children to bring in photos of their family and make a book showing the children's families, which can be used with adults or independently by children in the story corner.

### Activity Ideas

**Some of my favourite books for talking about difference include:**

Some really well known and loved stories such as Cinderella and Hans Christian Andersen's Ugly Duckling are quite clearly about excluding someone and worth a read focusing on issues surrounding exclusion.

Hutchins P, *Titch*, Puffin

Holstein E, *A Duck So Small*, Magi

McKee D, *Elmer (and series)*, Anderson Press

Cook T, *So Much*, Walker Books

Bernard A, *Clever Sticks*, HarperCollins

There is a beautifully illustrated series by Mary Auld, published by Franklin Watts called 'Meet the Family' with six books each about a different family member. Each book shows a variety of families who are all portrayed positively without any stereotyping and is a lovely stimulus for conversation about things such as gender roles

### Activity Ideas

#### 6. Swap places if you....(parachute game)

'What I'm good at' photos

#### Learning Outcomes

- to understand that other people like some of the same things, and do the same things as they themselves do.
- form positive relationships with other children and adults.
- develop confidence, self-esteem and a sense of security.

We will know we have been successful if we

- understand that lots of people at nursery like the same things to do as we do, and that we could all have lots of fun playing together.
- understand that we are all good at different things.

#### Resources required

- Parachute (if you don't have a parachute, a circle of seats or mats on the floor would work just as well).
- Photos of each child playing at something they know they're good at, or their favourite nursery activity.

Taking photos of the children at their favourite activity will have given you the opportunity to talk to each child about what they're good at and to give them lots of specific praise about what they do so well at their favourite activity. Building children's belief in themselves and their own abilities is important in relation to educating about equality as Kendall explains:

'Education that is multicultural is built on nurturing a positive self concept for all children from the earliest years. These strong, positive feelings about themselves should prepare children to be less threatened by change and diversity' (Kendall 1983; 31)

### Activity Ideas

#### **Time required**

Anything from 10 - 15 minutes.

#### **Method**

Holding the parachute (or sitting in a circle) together explain that we are going to change places when you say something that's about them or when you say something they like. Start with easy things like 'Change places if you are wearing a jumper.' If you are using a parachute, inflate the parachute together by counting to three, and the children who are changing places run under when the parachute is in the air.

End this part of the activity with a few turns of 'change places if you like ... (a specific activity at the nursery.)'

Settle down again in a circle. If you are using a parachute, everyone can sit on the edge of the parachute. Bring out the photos of each child doing something they're good at. Show the children each picture and make an individual comment on how well that child is doing, being sensitive towards shy children. Each time you talk about a different activity ask if anyone else likes doing that too. When activities are repeated comment that it is the same.

Highlight that everyone is good at different things, and that we all have different favourites, but we are all good at being friends and we all like playing.

### Activity Ideas

#### **Links to Free-Play Activities**

Make a book of all of the photos and keep it in your story area. If you have a camera that children are allowed to take photos with, children could be encouraged to take photos of each other doing things they're proud of. Display the photos in the area they were taken - this would help promote discussion, and give opportunities for adults to point out that the children playing there like the same as the child in the photograph.

Read *Clever sticks* (Bernard, A, HarperCollins) in which a Chinese boy teaches all of the children and adults at his nursery how to use chopsticks and each child teaches him to do things he'd been struggling with.

#### **Reference**

Kendall, F (1983) *Diversity in the Classroom - A Multicultural Approach to the Education of Young Children*, Teachers College Press, New York and London