

Planning for Learning through Food

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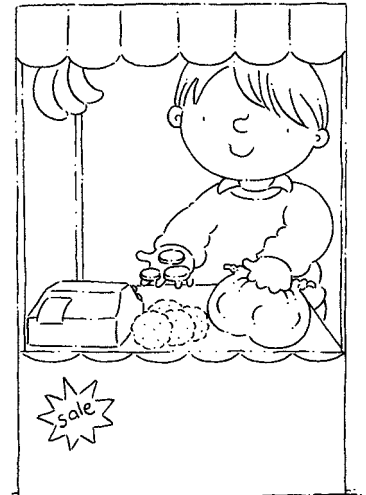
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Making plans

Child-friendly planning

The purpose of planning is to make sure that all children enjoy a broad and balanced experience of learning. Planning should be flexible, useful and child-friendly. It should reflect opportunities available both indoors and outside. Plans form part of a planning cycle in which practitioners make observations, assess and plan.

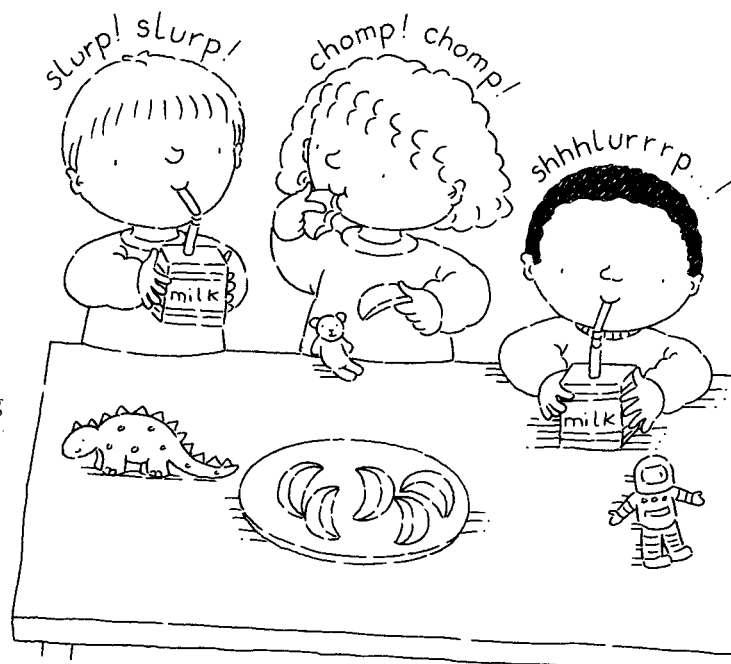
Children benefit from reflective planning that takes into account the children's current interests and abilities and also allows them to take the next steps in their learning. Plans should make provision for activity that promotes learning and a desire to imagine, observe, communicate, experiment, investigate and create.

Plans should include a variety of types of activity. Some will be adult-initiated or adult-led, that focus on key skills or concepts. These should be balanced with opportunities for child-initiated activity where the children take a key role in the planning. In addition there is a need to plan for the on-going continuous provision areas such as construction, sand and water, malleable materials, small world, listening area, role-play and mark-making. Thought also needs to be given to the enhanced provision whereby an extra resource or change may enable further exploration, development and learning.

The outdoor environment provides valuable opportunities for children's learning. It is vital that plans value the use of outdoor space.

The UK Frameworks

Within the UK a number of frameworks exist to outline the provision that children should be entitled to receive. Whilst a variety of terms and labels are used to describe the Areas of Learning there are key principles which are common to each document. For example they advocate that practitioners' planning should be personal based on observations and knowledge of the specific children within a setting. They acknowledge that young children learn best when there is scope for child-initiated activity. In addition it is accepted that young children's learning is holistic. Although within the documents Areas of Learning are presented separately to ensure that key areas are not over-looked, within settings, children's learning will combine areas. Thus the Areas of Learning are perhaps of most use for planning, assessment and recording.



Focused area plans

The plans you make for each day will outline areas of continuous provision and focused, adult-led activities. Plans for focused-area activities need to include aspects such as:

- resources needed;
- the way in which you might introduce activities;
- individual needs;
- the organisation of adult help;
- size of the group;
- timing;
- safety;
- key vocabulary.

Identify the learning and the Early Learning Goals that each activity is intended to promote. Make a note of any assessments or observations that you are likely to carry out. After carrying out the activities, make notes on your plans to say what was particularly successful, or any changes you would make another time.

A final note

Planning should be seen as flexible. Not all groups meet every day, and not all children attend every day. Any part of the plan can be used independently, stretched over a longer period or condensed to meet the needs of any group. You will almost certainly adapt the activities as children respond to them in different ways and bring their own ideas, interests and enthusiasms. The important thing is to ensure that the children are provided with a varied and enjoyable curriculum that meets their individual developing needs.

Using the 'Early Learning Goals'

The principles that are common to each of the United Kingdom curriculum frameworks for the early years are described on page 2. It is vital that, when planning for children within a setting, practitioners are familiar with the relevant framework's content and organisation for areas of learning. Regardless however, of whether a child attends a setting in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales they have a right to provision for all areas of learning. The children should experience activities which encourage them to develop their communication and language; personal, social, emotional, physical, mathematical and creative skills. They should have opportunities within literacy and be encouraged to understand and explore their world.

Within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012), Communication and Language; Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are described as Prime Areas of Learning that are 'particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive' (page 4, DfE 2012). The Specific Areas of Learning are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

For each Area of Learning the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) describe what children are expected to be able to do by the time they enter Year 1. These goals, detailed on pages 4 to 6, have been used throughout this book to show how activities relating to 'Food' could link to these expectations. For example, for Personal, Social and Emotional Development, one aim relates to the development of children's 'self-confidence and self-awareness'. Activities suggested which

provide the opportunity for children to do this have the reference PSE1. This will enable you to see which parts of the Early Learning Goals are covered for a given theme and to plan for areas to be revisited and developed.

In addition, an activity may be carried out to develop a range of different Early Learning Goals. For example, when the children make menus of favourite foods they will develop their writing skills for Literacy. Also, when they write with a pencil and illustrate their menus, they will use their fine motor skills which are part of Physical Development. Thus, whilst adult-focused activities may have clearly defined goals at the planning stage, it must be remembered that as children take on ideas and initiate their own learning and activities, goals may change.

The Prime Areas of Learning

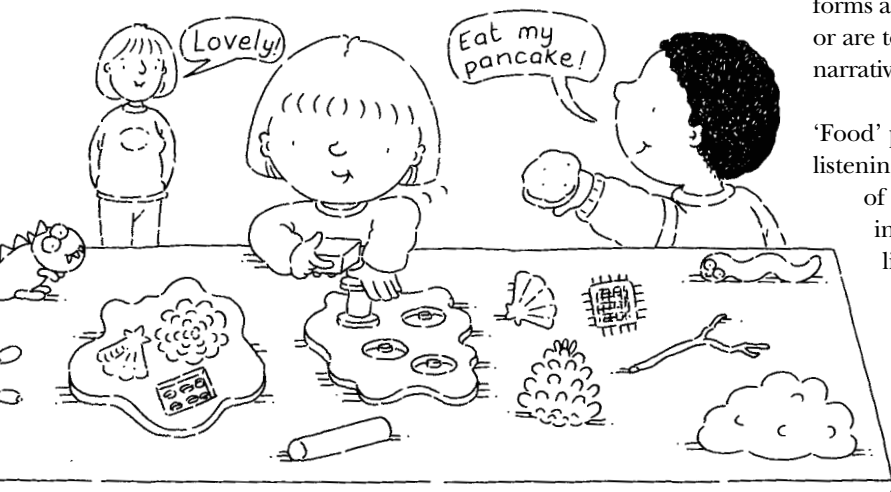
Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity. (CL1)

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. (CL2)

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events. (CL3)

'Food' provides many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. There are a wide range of books featuring food and these can be used to stimulate interest in the chosen themes, encouraging children to listen and to talk. When discussing foods from around the world, and identifying foods within nursery rhymes, children will have the opportunity to ask questions. Making shortbread will allow the children to follow instructions. Playing 'I went to market', and describing fruits and vegetables for others to guess, will encourage children to express themselves and to show awareness of listeners' needs.



Example chart to aid planning in the EYFS

Week beginning:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
FOCUSED ACTIVITIES					
Focus Activity 1:					
Focus Activity 2:					
Stories and rhymes					
CONTINUOUS PROVISION (Indoor)					
Collage					
Construction (large)					
Construction (small)					
ICT					
Imaginative play					
Listening					
Malleable materials					
Mark making					
Painting					
Role play					
Sand (damp)					
Sand (dry)					
Water					
CONTINUOUS PROVISION (Outdoor)					
Construction					
Creative play					
Exploratory play					
Gross motor					
ENHANCED PROVISION (Indoor)					
ENHANCED PROVISION (Outdoor)					



Theme 1: Favourite food

Communication and Language

- Talk about favourite foods. When do children eat them? (CL3)
- Look at a picture of a country hit by a famine. Discuss the importance of sharing. (CL1)
- Read or tell the story of Paddington Bear's arrival in London found in *A Bear Called Paddington* by Michael Bond. Talk about Paddington's favourite marmalade sandwiches. On triangles of paper ask children to make new sandwiches for Paddington (see activity opposite). (CL1)

Physical Development

- Use dough and paper plates to make models of favourite food. (PD1)
- Encourage children to work in pairs as they aim small foam balls to be caught in cones made from card. Pretend the balls are ice-cream which needs to be caught before it melts. (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Involve children in helping to produce a selection of healthy drinks for snack time. Invite children to choose their favourite one and to explain their choice. (PSE1)

Literacy

- Begin a collection of words to describe favourite foods. Collect the words in a sandwich box. (L1, 2)
- Invite children to make menus for a favourite meal. (L2)

Mathematics

- Make a group number line with pictures of favourite foods. (M1)
- Provide each child with a paper plate holding ten pictures of favourite foods. Play a game in which children in turn throw a die and 'eat' the corresponding number of foods. After each turn encourage children to say how many foods remain on their plates. The winner is the one who has the first empty plate. (M1)
- Use brown paper triangles and coloured circles to make collages of ice-cream cones (see activity opposite). (M2)

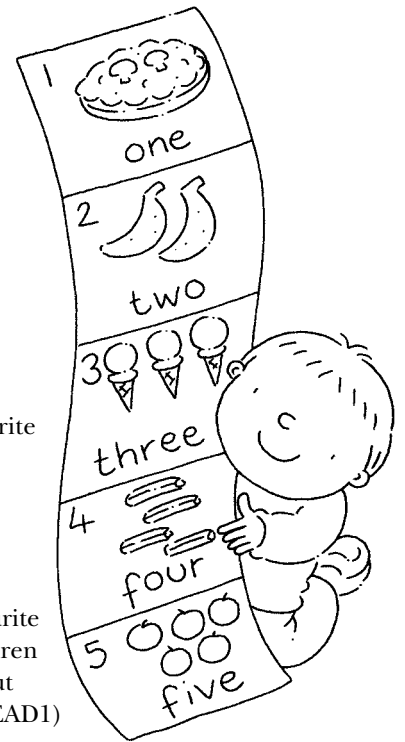
Understanding the World

- Look through books about animals to identify favourite foods for animals. Encourage children to draw picture menus of favourite foods for a minibeast. (UW2)
- Look through recipe books or on the internet for pictures of favourite pizza toppings. Work with small

groups to make favourite pizzas. (UW2, 3)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Paint pictures of favourite food. Encourage children to think carefully about shapes and colours. (EAD1)
- In the home area encourage children to role-play preparing favourite meals for their friends. (EAD2)
- Make favourite food posters by cutting pictures from magazines and wrapping paper. Encourage children to describe the way the food looks and tastes. (EAD1)
- Use clean packaging from favourite foods to build large models such as castles, vehicles, dinosaurs and robots. Show children how to cover plastic containers with masking tape before attempting to paint them and how to undo and remake, inside out, cereal packets to provide clean surfaces to decorate. (EAD2)



Activity: Favourite sandwiches

Learning opportunity: Responding to stories.

Early Learning Goal: Communication and Language. Listening and attention.

Resources: *A Bear Called Paddington* by Michael Bond; squares of brown and white paper of side length 21cm; crayons; pencils.

Key vocabulary: Sandwich, names for fillings, favourite.

Organisation: Whole group for the story, small group for making sandwiches.

What to do: Read or tell the story of Paddington's arrival in England.

Talk about his favourite sandwiches being ones filled with marmalade. Show children a square of paper and how to fold it diagonally to make two triangles. Inside colour it orange to represent marmalade.

Ask children to say which sound the word 'marmalade' begins with. Write an 'm' on the front of the sandwich.

Invite a small group to come and make paper sandwiches filled with their favourite fillings. Help children to write the initial sounds for the fillings.

When all the sandwiches have been made use them to play a game of 'Guess what is inside this sandwich. It is something beginning with ...'.

Activity: Making ice-cream cornets

Learning opportunity: Talking about flat shapes.

Early Learning Goal: Mathematics. Shape, space and measures.

Resources: Triangles to represent ice-cream cones cut from brown paper; circles to represent ice-cream cut from a variety of pastel shades of paper; scraps for adding decoration to the ice-cream; crayons.

Key vocabulary: Triangle, circle, ice-cream.

Organisation: Small group.

What to do: Tell the group that some people's favourite food is ice-cream. Talk about different ice-creams that the group has eaten and which flavours they like best.

Show how to stick coloured circles onto a piece of paper in a clump with a triangle underneath to make a picture of an ice-cream cornet. Add a small brown rectangle for a chocolate flake.

Invite children to make their own ice-creams. Encourage them to use the names for the shapes and to talk about their ice-creams' flavours.

Display

In the centre of a large board write 'My favourite food is...'

At the bottom of the board put up the group's favourite food number line.

At the top of the board arrange the ice-cream cones with labels of the flavours.

Cover a table with a bright tablecloth and place it in front of the board. Put out the paper sandwiches on plastic plates, the dough food and, also, the sandwich box word collections.

