

Planning for Learning through Fairy stories

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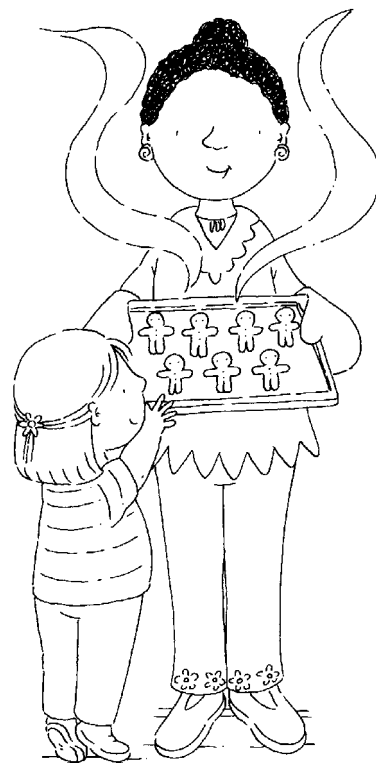
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Making plans

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 overlooked, within settings, children's learning will

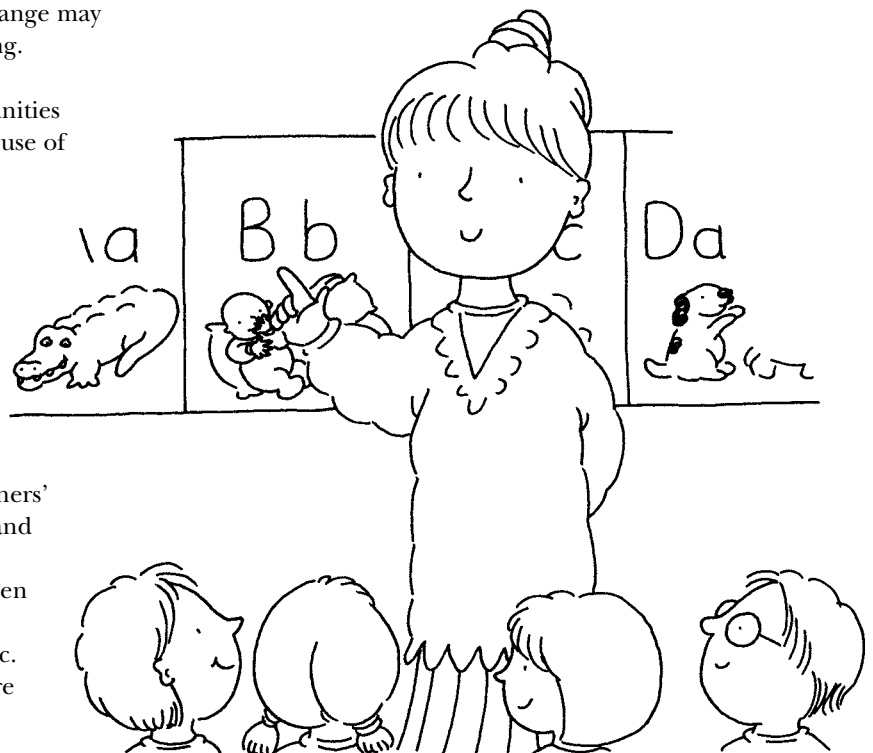
combine areas. Thus the Areas of Learning are perhaps of most use for planning, assessment and recording.

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.



Making plans

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 book

Read the section which outlines links to the Early Learning Goals (pages 4-6) and explains the rationale for focusing on 'Fairy Stories'.

The chart on page 7 gives an example format for weekly planning. It provides opportunity to plan for the on-going continuous provision, as well as more focused activities.

Use pages 8 to 19 to select from a wide range of themed, focused activities that recognise the importance of involving children in practical activities and giving them opportunities to follow their own interests. For each 'Fairy Stories' theme, two activities are described in detail as examples to help you in your planning and preparation. Key vocabulary, questions and learning opportunities are identified. Use the activities as a basis to:

- extend current and emerging interests and capabilities
- engage in sustained conversations
- stimulate new interests and skills.

Find out on page 20 how the Fairy Stories activities can be brought together within a Fairy Stories Book Day.

Use page 21 for ideas of resources to collect or prepare. Remember that the books listed are only suggestions. It is likely that you will already have within your setting a variety of other books that will be equally useful.

The activity overview chart on page 23 can be used either at the planning stage or after each theme has been completed. It will help you to see at a glance which aspects of children's development are being addressed and alert you to the areas which may need greater input in the future.



As children take part in the activities, their learning will progress. 'Collecting evidence' on page 22 explains how you might monitor each child's achievements.

There is additional material to support the working partnership of families and children in the form of a reproducible Family Page found inside the back cover.

It is important to appreciate that the ideas presented in this book will only be a part of your planning. Many activities that will be taking place as routine in your group may not be mentioned. For example, it is assumed that sand, dough, water, puzzles, role-play, floor toys, technology and large-scale apparatus are part of the ongoing early years experience. Role-play areas, stories, rhymes, singing, and group discussion times are similarly assumed to be happening in each week although they may not be a focus for described activities.

Remember to check children's health records for food allergies and food they may not eat and, also, your area health and safety guidelines, when planning the themes for Fairy Stories. Ensure that parents are aware of the planned activities. Do not attempt any baking or tasting activity without first obtaining parental consent.

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 'Fairy Stories' 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 write a note to Jack's mother in Theme 4 they will develop their writing skills for Literacy. Also, when they write with a pencil and illustrate their notes, 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)

'Fairy Stories' provide many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. There are a wide range of books featuring Fairy Stories and these can be used to stimulate interest in the chosen themes, encouraging children to listen and to talk. When partaking in the Fairy

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: The Gingerbread Man

Communication and Language

- Read 'The Gingerbread Man' story and then ask children questions about the events in the story. (CL1)
- Show children pictures from the story and discuss how they show what is happening. (CL2)
- Ask children to join in the refrain and say it with you. (CL3)
- Let children play in a Gingerbread Man role-play area. (CL3)

Physical Development

- Take children outside to run fast and slow. Can they jump over small obstacles like a gingerbread man? (PD1)
- Play gingerbread man tag. Use the fox as the chaser and the other children as gingerbread men being chased. How many can the fox eat in a given time? (PD1)
- Ensure children wash their hands and keep surfaces clean as they prepare their gingerbread men. (PD2)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Encourage children to work as a group as they make and cook gingerbread men. (PSE2)

Literacy

- Ask children to talk about what the Gingerbread Man does once he is out of the oven. (L1)
- Write up the refrain and ask children say it with you as you point to the words. (L1)
- Ask children to write names for their gingerbread men. (L2)

Mathematics

- Help children weigh the ingredients for the gingerbread men and compare the amounts of different ingredients used. Do we use more flour or more ginger in the recipe? (M1)
- Encourage the children to count how many currants will be needed for the eyes, nose and buttons on each gingerbread man. (M1)
- Draw attention to the many different animals the Gingerbread Man escaped from. Make a chart to show the different animals. (M2)

Understanding the World

- Discuss the different features in the landscape that the gingerbread man went through during his escape. (UW2)
- Go outside and look for grass, hillocks and trees. (UW2)
- Show them pictures of ponds to give them an idea of where the crafty fox outwitted the Gingerbread Man. (UW2)

- In preparation for cooking gingerbread men, encourage children to describe what they see, smell and where appropriate taste. (NB Children with coeliac disease may not be able to eat certain flours which contains gluten.) (UW1)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Use playdough for rolling and cutting into gingerbread men shapes. (EAD1)
- Draw round a child and make a big gingerbread man that can be painted and decorated. Put him up for display. (EAD1)
- Make up a gingerbread man dance to some fast music. (EAD2)

Activity: Making gingerbread men

Learning opportunity: Developing an interest in baking and understanding the need for hygiene when making things to eat.

Early Learning Goals: Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Self-confidence and self-awareness. Understanding the World. Technology.

Resources: Ingredients for the biscuits; baking trays; saucepan; wooden spoons; mixing bowl; sieve; rolling pin and board; greaseproof paper; a gingerbread man cutter; spatula and wire tray.

Organisation: Small group.

Key vocabulary: Mix, stir, roll, knead, cut, bake, clean, tidy.

What to do: Before children start to cook help them to:

- Tie back long hair
- Wash their hands (children with eczema should wear surgical gloves)
- Wear an apron or overall
- Roll up long sleeves and secure them
- Check all surfaces being used are wiped clean.

Ingredients (makes at least six gingerbread men, depending on size of the cutter):

- 75g soft brown sugar
- 75g black treacle

- 2 teaspoons of ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon of cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon of baking powder
- 50g margarine or butter
- 250g plain flour
- 1 egg
- currants and glacé cherries.

Pre-heat the oven to 170°C (325°F/Mark 3).

Melt sugar, treacle, spices and margarine/butter in the saucepan over a low heat. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Mix in baking powder. Sift flour and salt into the mixing bowl. Pour in the syrup mixture and the beaten egg. Mix together until it forms a firm dough.

Knead the dough on a floured board. Leave to rest for a few minutes. (If fridge is available, wrap dough in greaseproof paper and pop in fridge for ten minutes.)

Take dough and roll it on floured board then cut out gingerbread men using cutter. Decorate with currant's for eyes, noses and buttons. Use a slice of glace cherry for mouths.

Put in oven and bake for ten minutes. Cool on wire tray.

After the cooking session is over remind children that you must turn off the oven and they must help you:

- Put away any left-over ingredients
- Collect together all the dirty utensils
- Wash and put away utensils
- Wipe down all the work surfaces
- Leave everything clean and tidy for the next group.

As the children make their gingerbread men ask open-ended questions, encouraging them to use as many senses as possible. What does the flour feel like? Do they like the smell of ginger and cinnamon?

Activity: Gingerbread man journey game

Learning opportunity: Children will develop the ability to count using a game.

Early Learning Goal: Mathematics. Number.

Resources: A simple dice and board game.

Organisation: Small group working with an adult.

Key vocabulary: Dice, rolling, counting on, counting back.

What to do: Draw a simple track on white card, marked in numbered squares up to 50. Write instructions outside the track which point at different squares such as 'Chased by the

old woman – go on three squares'; 'Seen by the cow – go back one square'. Have at least six instructions.

Cut out gingerbread men shapes to act as counters.

Sit with children and help them throw the dice, move their counters and read and carry out the instructions. Encourage them to count forwards and backwards as they make their moves. Point out the names of the bigger numbers as they come to them. Encourage them to play fairly.

Display

Draw round a child and cut out a big gingerbread man. Give each child an opportunity to help paint and decorate him, then fix him to a wall or board. Put around him pictures made by individual children showing the different people and animals he met on his way. Label each person and animal to help with word and letter recognition.