

Planning for Learning through Journeys

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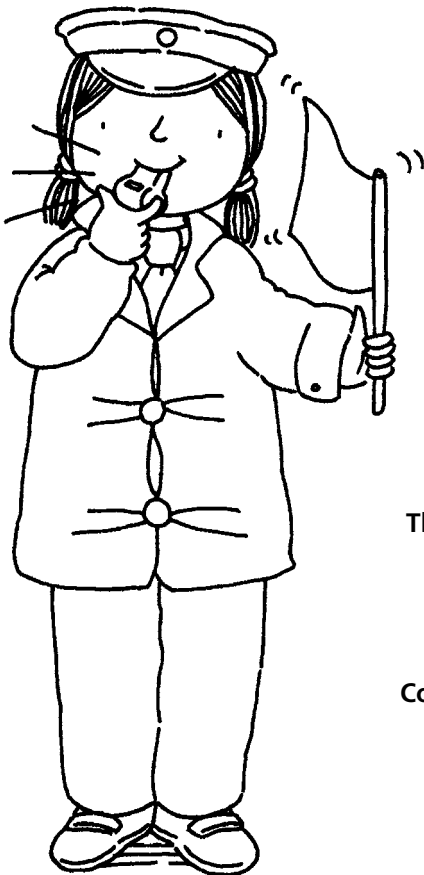
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Published by Practical Pre-School Books, A Division of MA Education Ltd,
St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 0PB Tel: 020 7738 5454
www.practicalpreschoolbooks.com

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Planning for Learning through Journeys ISBN: 978-1-909280-60-1

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:

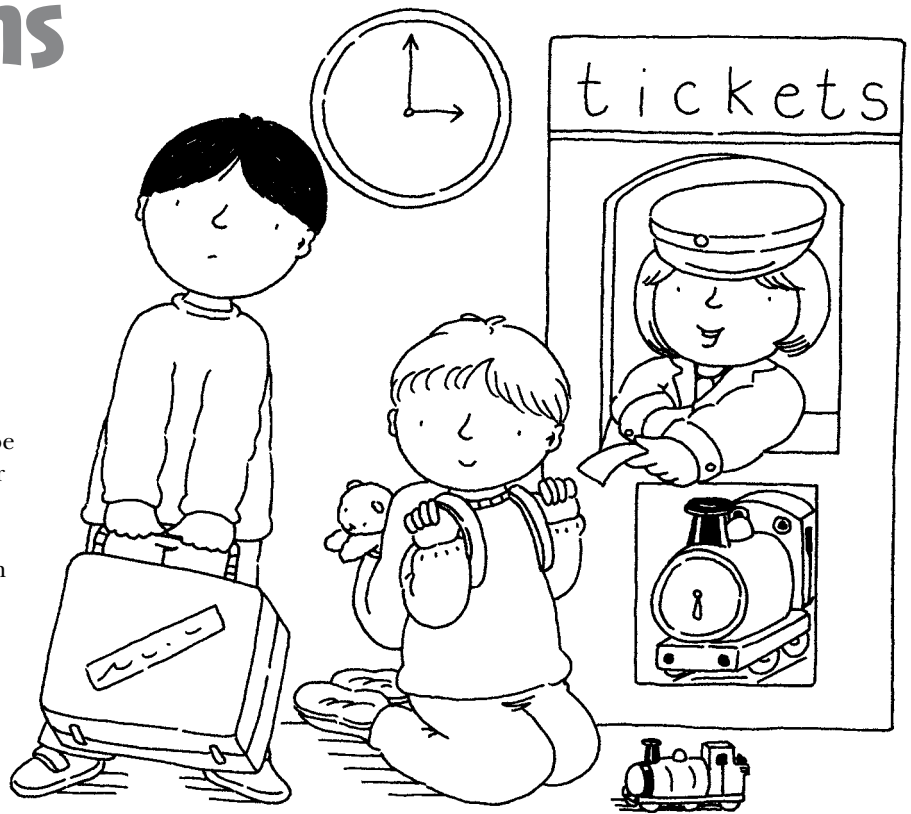
- resources needed;
- the way in which you might introduce activities;
- individual needs;
- the organisation of adult help;
- size of the group;
- timing;
- safety;
- key vocabulary.

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.

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 'Journeys'.

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 'Journeys' 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 Journeys activities can be brought together with The Outing.

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.

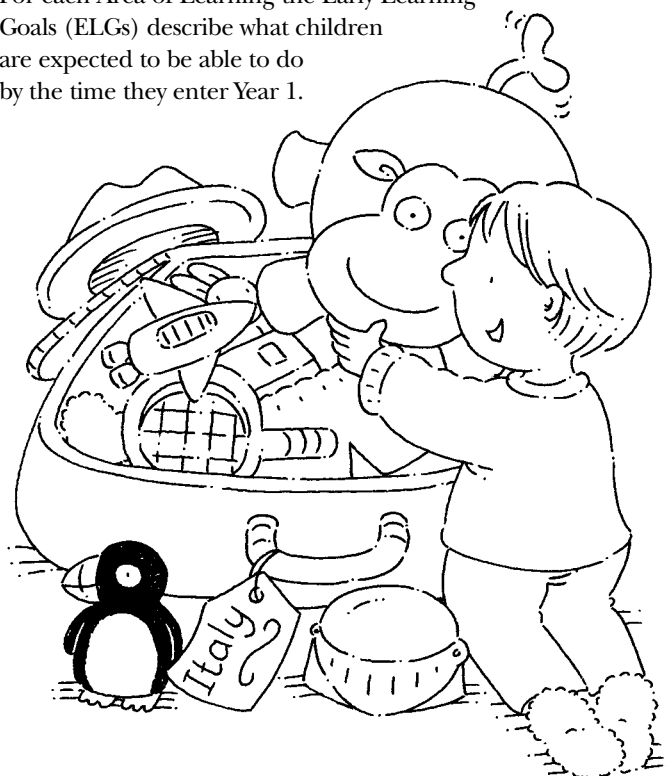
It is important to appreciate that the ideas presented in this book will only be a part of your planning. Many activities that will be taking place as routine in your group may not be mentioned. For example, it is assumed that sand, dough, water, puzzles, role-play, floor toys, technology and large scale 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.

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 'Journeys' 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 tickets and booking forms for the travel agency or train station, they will develop their writing skills for Literacy. Also, when they hold a pencil correctly and use a ruler to draw boxes, they will use their fine motor skills which are part of Physical Development. Thus, while 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)

'Journeys' provides many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. There are a wide range of books featuring journeys and these can be used to stimulate interest in the chosen themes, encouraging children to listen and to talk. When discussing journeys on foot and using different modes of transport, children will have the opportunity

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: On foot

Communication and Language

- Start the topic by taking the children on a 'journey on foot' around the setting. Point out sights, sounds, and smells, and take photographs to use in later activities. Talk about local places and ask children to describe their journey. (CL2, 3)
- Make a class book of 'Journeys the children have made...' beginning with 'on foot' and add to it throughout the topic. Ask children to describe and draw pictures of themselves on a favourite walk. (CL3)
- Read *Alfie's Feet* by Shirley Hughes. Do the children know the difference between left and right? (CL1)

Physical Development

- Can the children put on their own coats and fasten them properly to go on their walk? (PD2)
- Make a diagram or plan of the equipment in the room. Ask the children to estimate how many steps it will take to walk from the climbing frame to the door. Use picture cards to plan a route around the room. Introduce directions and positional language – left, right, under, behind, and so on. (PD1)
- Play the follow-my-leader game (see activity opposite). (PD1)
- Put a thin layer of dry sand or a mixture of cornflour and water in a shallow tray. Ask the children to take their finger for a journey to make a long and winding road. Can they follow instructions about which directions to take? (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Before going out on the walk, talk to the children about the need to hold hands, listen and stay together to keep safe. (PSE1)
- During circle time, talk about how it might feel to not be able to walk. Borrow some child-sized crutches or a

wheelchair. How easy is it to get round the room in a wheelchair? Does it work better if they help each other and work as part of a team? (PSE2, 3)

- Talk about journeys the children have made. Do they prefer to walk or go by car? (PSE2)

Literacy

- Help children to write or scribe descriptions of what the children see on their walks to include in the class book. (L2)
- Make left and right bracelets for the children to wear, with the initial letters L and R clearly marked. Which hand do they hold their pencil in? (L2)

Mathematics

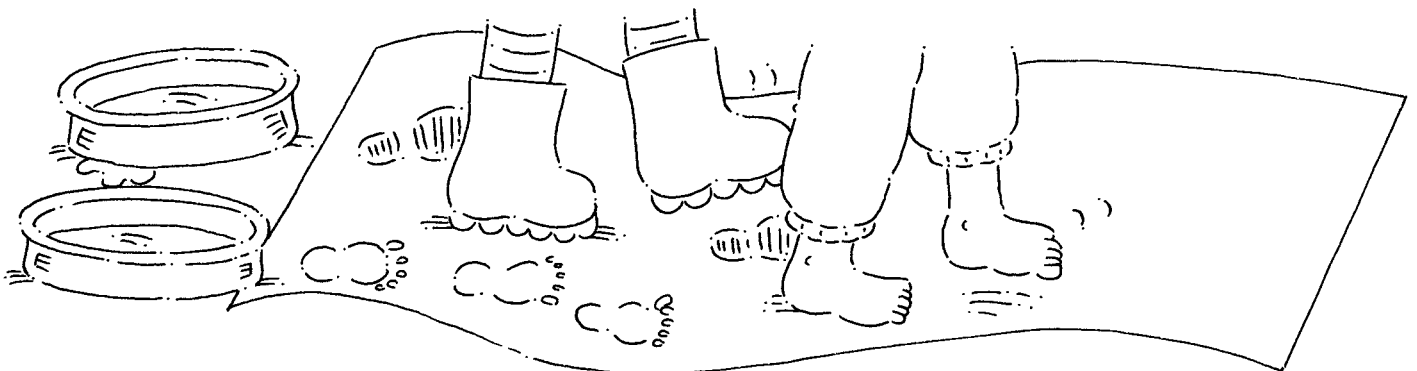
- Draw a bar chart or pictogram of how the children travel to nursery/school. Help the children to record the results using counting skills. Sing 'How did you travel to school today?' to the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush'. All the children who came on foot can reply: 'We walked to school this morning.' (M1)
- Provide a selection of plastic animals and minibeasts for the children to sort according to the number of legs or wings they have or how they move, run, crawl, jump, or fly. (M1, 2)

Understanding the World

- Help the children to discover more about where they live (see activity opposite). (UW2)
- Invite them to draw a simple map of their journey home. (UW2)

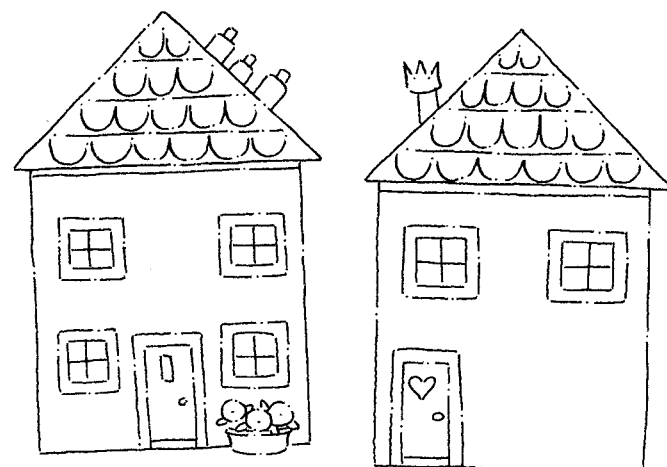
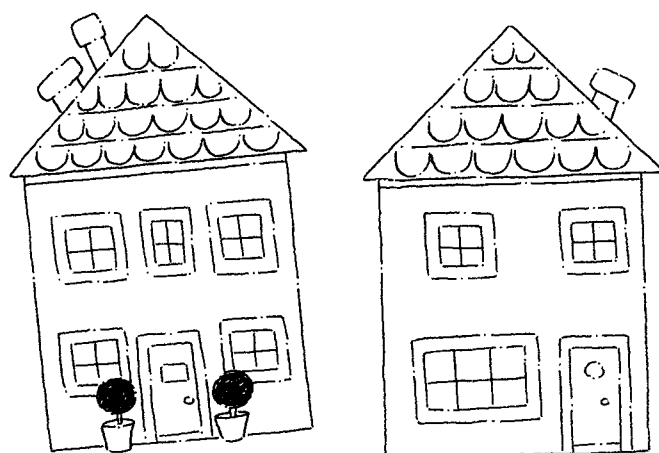
Expressive Arts and Design

- Roll out some lining paper on the floor and ask the children to go on a paint walk. Hold the child's hand as they step into a tray of paint and walk along the



paper. Have a bowl of water ready at the end to wash the feet. Try this with shoes on and off to make a variety of footprints. Cut out the prints and make trails for children to follow. (EAD1)

- Go on a listening walk around the room or outside. Help the children to notice the different sounds around them. Try recording the sounds and listening back to them. Can the children find ways of reproducing sounds using their voices, bodies and instruments? (EAD2)



Activity: I live at...

Learning opportunity: Looking at maps and observing local environment.

Early Learning Goal: Understanding the World. The world.

Resources: Enlarged photocopied map of local area or go online to www.googlemaps.com; blown-up photographs of local buildings and features, for example nursery/school, park, shops, church; string; coloured stickers; paper; felt pens.

Organisation: Small group.

Key vocabulary: Live, map, local, address, road, street, name of your local town, nearest, furthest.

What to do: Display the map on a board so that all the children can see. Talk about each of the photographs and stick them around the edge of the map, linking them with string.

Ask children to find their homes on the map and mark them with coloured stickers. Who lives furthest away? How do the children come to school?

Help the children to complete the sentence 'I live at...'. Talk about why it is important to remember their address. Help them to scribe their addresses and compile into a group address book.

Can the children draw pictures of their homes to display with the map? What do they like or dislike about where they live?

Activity: Follow me to school

Learning opportunity: Listening and responding as a group in a follow-my-leader game.

Early Learning Goal: Physical Development. Moving and handling.

Resources: A copy of the song 'I went to school one morning and I walked like this' from *This Little Puffin*; tambourine; bells.

Organisation: Whole group.

Key vocabulary: This will depend on the verses used and on other ideas of how to move suggested by the children.

What to do: Sitting in a circle on the floor, sing the song with the children and ask for volunteers to move around making up appropriate actions for each verse. Can they think of other ways of moving around and getting to school? Ask the children to stand in a long line and follow you around the room copying the different ways of moving. Encourage some of the children to take a turn at being the leader and choosing how to move.

Extend the game by introducing music signals. Ask the children to move round in a circle. When they hear one beat on the tambourine, they must turn round and walk in the opposite direction. Two beats – change speed, three beats – change level, that is on tip-toe or close to the floor. What could they do when they hear the bells?

Display

Divide a board in half labelled 'left' and 'right'. Cut out and mount some of the foot paintings. Can the children sort them into left and right prints?

Display the book 'Journeys the children have made on foot' and add to it as the topic continues. Begin a display of books used during the week and ask children to find other books for each week of the theme.