

Planning for Learning through Colour

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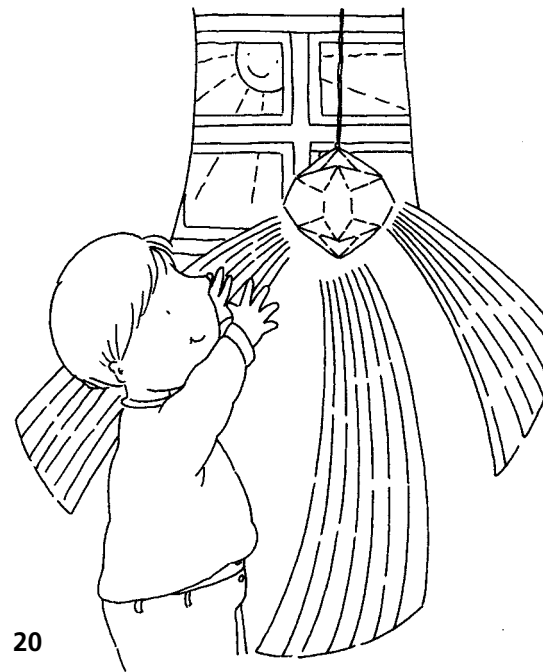
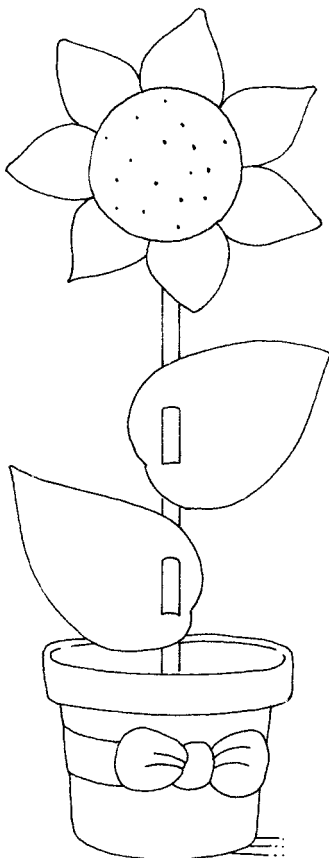
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Making plans

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.

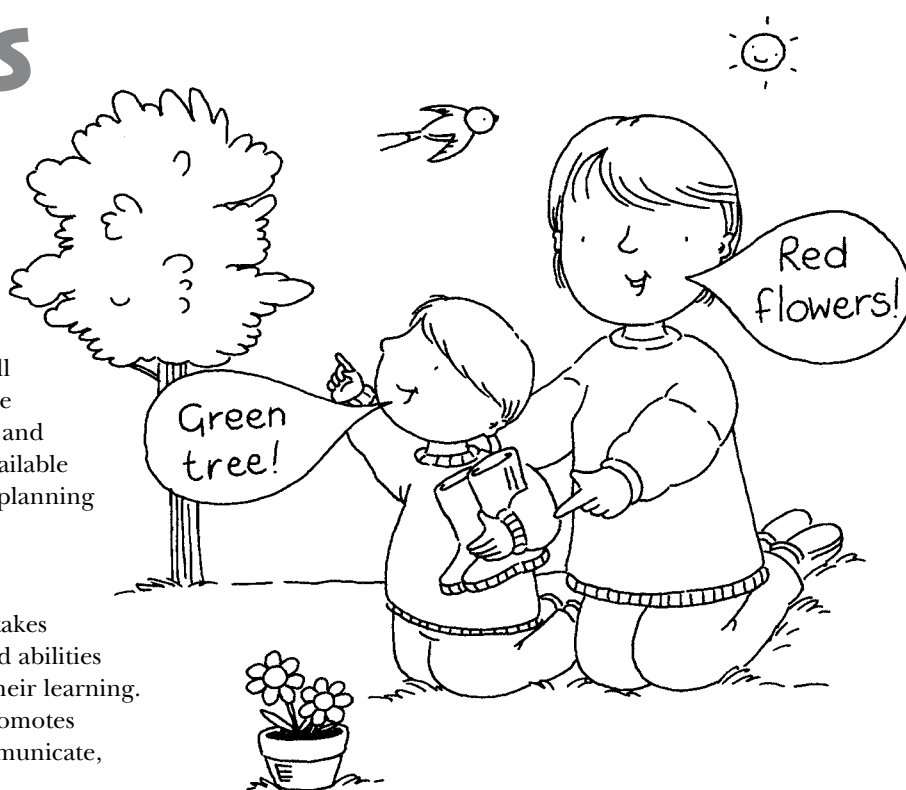
Children benefit from reflective planning that takes into account the children's current interests and abilities and also allows them to take the next steps in their learning. Plans should make provision for activity that promotes learning and a desire to imagine, observe, communicate, experiment, investigate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

Making plans

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 'Colour'.

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 'Colour' 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 'Colour' activities can be brought together within a Rainbow Party.

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 'Colour' 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 lists and take orders in the role-play painters and decorators they will develop their writing skills for Literacy. Also, as they collaborate in role-play they will make relationships and use their imaginations. 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

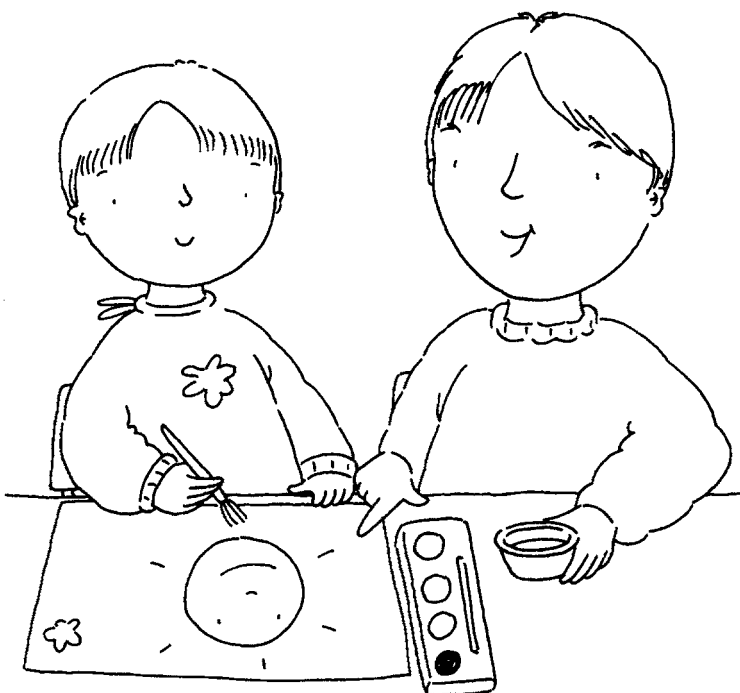
Communication and Language

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)

'Colour' provides many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. There are a wide range of books featuring colour and these can be used to stimulate interest in the chosen themes, encouraging children to listen and to talk. When going on a colour detecting walk, playing 'I went to market' for yellow purchases and discussing why



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: Black and white

Communication and Language

- To introduce the theme 'Black and White' go on a colour detecting walk. Before leaving, talk about the importance of listening to instructions and staying together. Help children to notice that there is variation in the shades and tones of a particular colour. How many things can they find that are just black or white? (CL1, 3)
- Read *Elmer and Wilbur* by David McKee. Talk about the colours on Elmer and Wilbur. Does Elmer have any black on him? How are the two elephants similar? How are they different? (CL1)
- Talk about opposites and the fact that black is the opposite of white. Play a game in which children are picked and do the opposite of what they are told. (CL2)

Physical Development

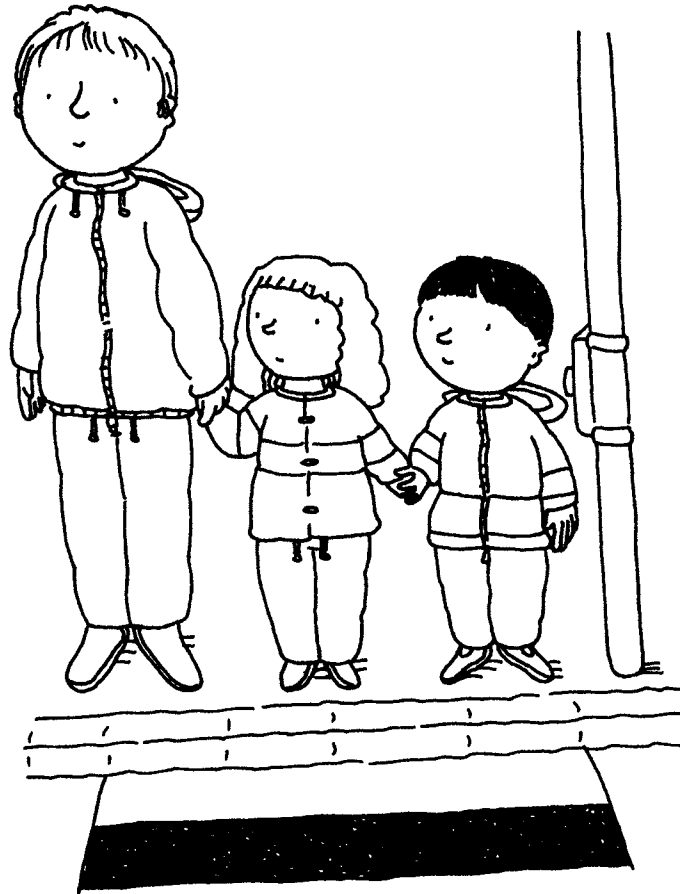
- Weave black and white strips of paper to make mats. (PD1)
- Use white modelling dough made from cornflour to make snow animals. Display against a black background. (PD1)
- Use white playground chalk to draw lines on the ground for children to move along in a variety of ways. Encourage children to listen to instructions telling them how and when to move, and to stay on the lines. (PD1)
- Make spinners from stiff white card circles with a short pencil through the centre. Show children how to draw patterns such as spirals, parallel straight lines or zig zag lines with a black pen and spin the spinners. What happens to their patterns? How do the patterns make them feel? (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Show children a piece of paper with a small spot of ink on it. Ask them what they see. Most are likely to tell you that they see a spot and not mention the rest of the paper. Talk about the importance of not only noticing when things are wrong. (PSE2)
- Invite a road safety officer (contact through your local authority) to talk about how to cross roads safely and the importance of using zebra crossings where available. (PSE2)

Literacy

- Begin a big book colour dictionary (see activity opposite). (L1, 2)
- Enjoy writing familiar words. Use a black pen or pencil to write the words on white paper, or white chalk or crayon on black paper. (L2)



Mathematics

- Put out a selection of 2-D and 3-D shapes and shadows cut out from black sugar paper. Ask children to match the shapes to their shadows. Encourage them to use the correct names for the shapes. (M2)
- Use bought or home-made blocks to print a repeating pattern using white paint on black sugar paper. Can the children continue the pattern? (M2)
- Play games using black and white dice and dominoes. Encourage children to count the spots as they play. (M1)

Understanding the World

- Read *Winnie the Witch* by Korky Paul and Valerie Thomas. Discuss why Winnie could not see her cat in the black house. Use wax crayons or chalks to draw a black cat 'hiding' in a black room. (UW2)
- Discuss why white is a good colour to wear at night. Lay pieces of paper of different colours on a sheet of black paper. Talk about evenings when it is dark. Investigate which colours can be seen from a distance on the black background. (UW2)
- Look at some pictures of animals which are black and white such as pandas and zebras. On black paper, use

only white paint to make pictures of zebras, polar bears and pandas (see activity opposite). (UW2)

- Encourage children to use magnifiers as they examine black and white newspaper pictures. Draw attention to the many tiny dots which are closely packed to make the picture. (UW2)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Use thin black paint and white paper to do blow paintings of winter trees on snowy days. (EAD1, 2)
- Do a collage using newsprint on either black or white paper. Encourage children to compare the appearance of the pictures on the white and the black backgrounds. (EAD1)
- Show children how white can be added to black paint a little at a time to make a series of greys. How many greys can the group make? (EAD1)
- Make and play with shadow puppets. (EAD1, 2)

Activity: Painting animals on black paper

Learning opportunity: Discussing why zebras and pandas have distinct markings. Painting pictures of animals using only white paint on black paper.

Early Learning Goal: Understanding the World. The world.

Resources: White ready-mixed paint; a selection of thin and thicker brushes; white chalk; A4 and A3 sized pieces of black paper; pictures of pandas, zebras and polar bears.

Key vocabulary: Black, white, zebra, panda, polar bear.

Organisation: Small group.

What to do: Show the group the pictures of the animals. Check that children know what they are. Has anyone ever seen one?

Look closely at the markings on the zebras and the pandas.

Tell the children that all zebras have different markings – no two are the same. Explain that the panda's black and white face warns other animals to stay away.

On a piece of black paper paint a few stripes like a zebra's and ask children what they think you have painted.

Invite the children to paint either a polar bear, a panda or a zebra using only white paint – explain that the black parts of the animals will not need to be painted.

Some may wish to draw their animal with chalk before painting, others may want to try painting stripes and other white patterns on black paper before attempting to paint an animal.

Activity: Colour dictionary

Learning opportunity: Co-operating to make a colour dictionary and reading the names of colours.

Early Learning Goal: Literacy. Reading. Writing.

Resources: A big book with A1 sized pages made from pieces of black, white, red, yellow, blue, green, orange and purple card. The name of the colour should be written clearly at the top of each page. You also need a simple, well illustrated dictionary and a book about colours – for example *Maisy's Colours* by Lucy Cousins; a basket containing pictures of objects; and scraps of papers in a variety of colours but predominantly black and white.

Key vocabulary: Dictionary, book, black, white, red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple.

Organisation: Whole group.

What to do: Show the group the dictionary. Tell the children it is a dictionary and ask them if they know what it is used for.

Ask them to suggest words which they might look up in the dictionary. What sounds do they begin with? Look up the words.

Show the children the colour dictionary. Help them to read the words written on each page.

Explain to the group that the dictionary will contain pictures of things that are a particular colour, scraps which are the colour and words. Today they are going to begin the black and white pages.

Ask a child to come and select a black picture from the basket. What is it? Stick the picture on the black page and together write what the object is. Invite other children to select black or white pictures and scraps.

Ask the children to bring from home other scraps, pictures and words for the colour dictionary.

Display

Mount the grey paintings together to form a stunning large patchwork. Edge the patchwork with a border of white paper next to a strip of black.

Cut around the children's black and white animals and mount them on white paper. Cover a board with black backing paper and stick on white silhouettes of trees, grass and bamboo. Arrange the animals on the scene.