

Planning for Learning through Summer

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Contents

Making plans 2-3

Using the 'Early Learning Goals' 4-6

EYFS Planning Chart 7

Theme 1: Detecting Summer 8-9

Theme 2: Summer fruits 10-11

Theme 3: Summer flowers 12-13

Theme 4: Summer sun 14-15

Theme 5: Summer holidays 16-17

Theme 6: Sports day 18-19

Bringing it all together – Sports day 20

Resources 21

Collecting evidence of children's learning 22

Activity overview 23

Home links 24

Family page Inside back cover

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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.

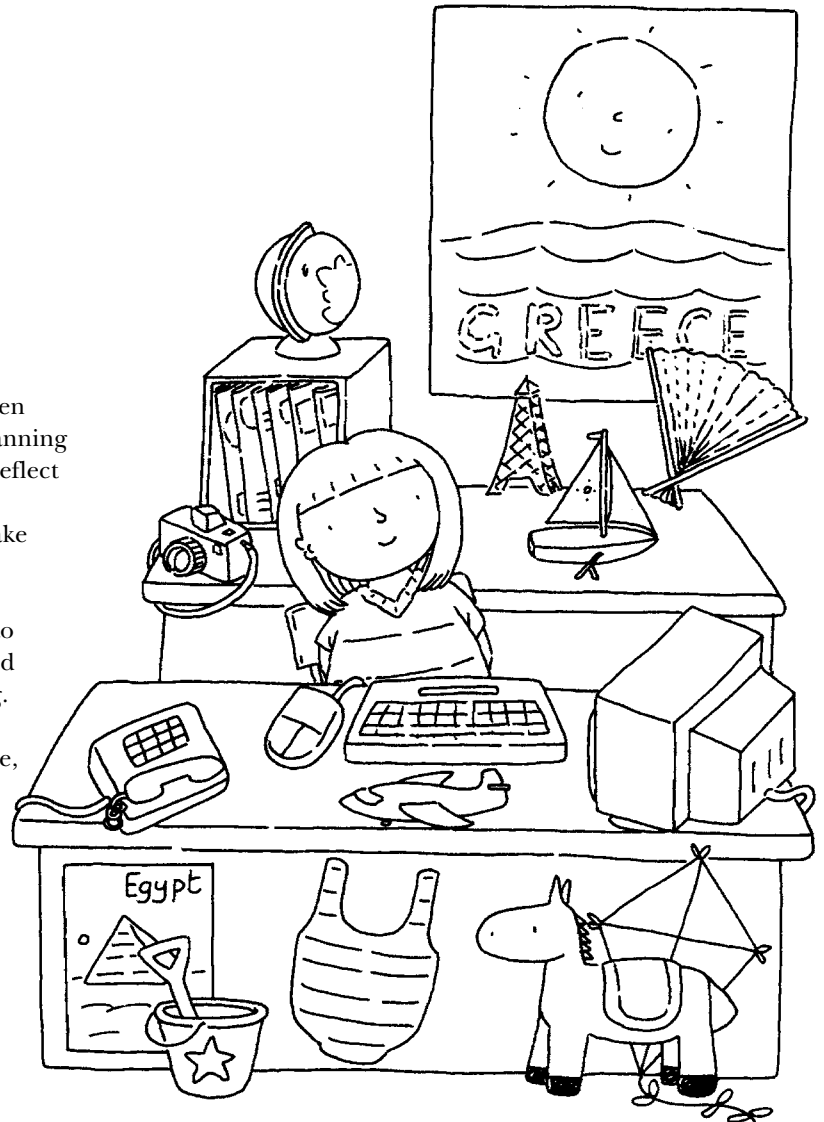
Plans should include a variety of types of activity.

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 and although Areas of Learning are presented separately within each framework, in reality children's activities and explorations cross over



and combine with different subject areas. Thus the Areas of Learning are perhaps of most use for planning, assessment and recording to ensure that key areas are not overlooked.

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

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 (2014), 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 7, DfE 2014). 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 'Summer' 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 passports and book summer holidays in the role-play travel agent 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)

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)					



Week 1: Detecting Summer

Communication and Language

- Go on a walk to detect signs of the Summer. Before you go, talk about the importance of staying together, listening to instructions and being sensitive to the environment. (CL1, 2)
- Encourage children to talk about the things they like to do in the Summer. Look at pictures of people outside in the Summer. Talk about the clothes people wear and what they are doing. (CL3)

Physical Development

- Make marble minibeasts and use them to go round card tracks (see activity opposite). (PD1)
- Enjoy playing with bats and balls. (PD1)
- Enjoy writing 'S' shapes with a wide range of materials. (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Outside hide pictures of objects that might be useful in the Summer. Give clues for children to find the objects. Once found, encourage children to say why the objects are useful. (PSE1, 2)

Literacy

- Start to build a word bank of Summer words. Scribe words suggested by the children on large pieces of card or stiff paper (for example, ice-cream, sun, hot, seaside). Ask children to read the word and to draw pictures by the words to illustrate them. (L2)
- Use the words in 'Summer sentences'. What is the longest sentence that the group can write? (L1, 2)

Mathematics

- Make ladybirds by painting small pebbles or use red plastic lids from plastic milk bottles. Vary the number of dots on the ladybirds from one to six. Play simple dice and estimation games (see activity opposite). (M1)
- Show the children a large, safe thermometer, such as those from educational suppliers. Talk about how thermometers are used to measure how hot or cold something is. Introduce the word 'temperature'. Link to experiences children may have had in having their temperature taken. Show how the thermometer has numbers on it, and that the bigger the number is, the hotter the temperature. What is the temperature of the air in the room? How hot is it outside? (M1, 2)

Understanding the World

- Use a camera to record the 'Summer detecting walk'.



When the photographs are printed the children can work collaboratively to make a large book about the walk. (UW3)

- Go on a minibeast hunt, encouraging children to look closely in small places, such as under a stone. Talk about why they need to be careful as they search. Explain that they should be 'gentle giants' in the world of tiny creatures and any disturbance, especially handling, should be avoided. (UW2)
- Begin a sunny day chart to talk about in Week 3. Ask children each day how hot or sunny it is. Record this with sunny faces. If it's very hot, use either more suns or vary the size of the sun. (UW2)
- Use the Internet and books to find pictures of animals that can be found in the Summer but hibernate during the winter. (UW2, 3)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Encourage children to think about the sounds they hear during the Summer: lawn mowers, ice-cream vans, insects buzzing, birds singing, sea sounds or perhaps even a thunderstorm. Recreate these sounds using percussion instruments and body sounds. (EAD1)
- Provide the children with large sheets of paper, brushes, paint or bright pastels and encourage them to make a picture of themselves carrying out a favourite Summertime activity. (EAD2)

Activity: Ladybird games

Learning opportunity: Counting to six.

Early Learning Goal: Mathematics. Numbers.

Resources: 24 ladybirds made from laminated red card, red plastic milk bottle lids or painted pebbles (four ladybirds with one dot, four with two dots, and so on); four A4-sized leaves made from green felt; a dice numbered one to six; a dice numbered 0, 1, 1, 2, 2, 3.

Organisation: two to four children seated at a small table or comfortably on the floor.

Key vocabulary: How many...? Count, ladybird, leaf, one, two, three, four, five, six.

What to do: Show the children the ladybirds. Encourage them to work together to sort them into sets according to the number of spots. Ask children how many are in each set. Explain the rules and play one of the games below.

Give each child a leaf. Use the 0 to 3 dice. Check that children recognise and understand the numbers. In turn children shake the dice, pick up the number of ladybirds and place them on a leaf.

Give each child a leaf. Use the 1 to 6 dice. In turn children shake the dice and collect a ladybird with the same number of spots. The aim is to collect one for each number one to six. If children throw a number they have already collected they do not pick up a ladybird.

Put out six ladybirds. Ask children to count them. Spread them out. Ask how many there are. Count to show there are still six. Ask children to close their eyes. Take two of the ladybirds and hide them under a leaf. Ask the children to open their eyes and say how many are hiding. Help the children to count the four they can see and to work out that two are under the leaf. Repeat by hiding other numbers.

Activity: Marble minibeasts

Learning opportunity: Using scissors with control and regard for safety. Controlling speed and direction of marble minibeasts through a maze.

Early Learning Goal: Physical Development. Moving and handling.

Resources: A ready-made marble minibeast; for each child a plastic drinks bottle lid; a marble; a piece of card about

10 x 10cm; a pair of scissors; felt pens or crayons; double-sided sticky tape; a pre-drawn maze on stiff A4 card.

Organisation: Up to six children seated around a table.

Key vocabulary: Minibeast, names for minibeasts made by the children.

What to do: Let the children look at the ready-made minibeast. Show them how it is made and suggest they make their own.

A minibeast is cut from card and stuck to the top of the lid with sticky tape.

Place a marble under the lid and invite children to take their creatures for walks.

Introduce children to the mazes – a simple route drawn on card with a start and finish. Show how the minibeasts can be steered along the routes. Encourage children to persevere!

Display

Start a summer wall display by making a background of grassy green with occasional sponge printed leafy trees. As the weeks progress children will enjoy adding cut-outs of themselves carrying out various activities, or can add items which will personalise the display to your area. Examples might include a feature of a local park, familiar characters or buildings.

Display the children's illustrations of summer activities, with suitable captions dictated or written by the children.

