



Helford River / teachers notes

Getting in Touch / Environmental Awareness Activities

Sensory activities to encourage kids to take a broader look at the seashore and what's around them.

Count the Sounds of the Seashore Symphony

This is a good activity for calming a group down, particularly before exploring a seashore site, outdoor walk etc. It makes them aware of using other senses to explore the shore, not just their eyes, and the benefits of being quiet!

Get the children to sit on the beach quietly and raise both arms in the air with their fists closed. Explain that for every different sound they hear they can count it on their fingers. Get them to close their eyes when the 'symphony' begins.

When most have all ten fingers in the air tell them to open their eyes and discuss the sounds they all heard.

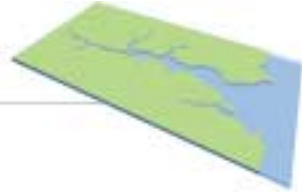
Sound maps

Equipment – pens and paper.

This is a good activity for calming a group down, particularly before exploring a seashore site, walk etc. It makes them aware of using other senses to explore the shore, not just their eyes.

Ask the group to sit down. Tell them to put a cross in the middle of their paper or postcard - this is them. They will draw representations of the sounds around them. After explaining the following instructions tell them to gently put their fingers in their ears and to close their eyes. Let them settle and tap them on the shoulder to show they can open their ears and eyes. Now they can begin to draw. When the whole group has finished they can pair up and explain their map to each other, or to the whole group, depending on size of group. Were all the sounds natural? Is it quieter now than other times of year? Are there sounds which the wildlife would not like?

Back in the classroom, the maps could be used to work the other way, to recall the noises heard on the shore for reproducing using musical instruments.



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Beach Detectives

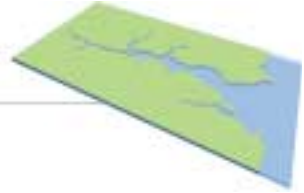
This is a scavenger hunt to help the children to really look at what is around them on the beach and to use their imaginations.

Before the shore visit, write a list of things they have to look for. Give each group / pair a list and a bucket / bag to collect their items in. Make sure you define the area they are allowed to look in and send them off for a set time to collect their treasure. Encourage them to use their imaginations – not everything has to be physically collected, they can collect things in their memories too!

An example list could be:

“Your mission: To find and bring back the items listed, either in your bag, or in your memory.... “

- An empty shell
- Something round and smooth
- Something that isn't from the sea or beach
- A feather
- Something slimy
- Something colourful
- A smell
- A sound
- Something old



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The Artists Palette

Equipment – Ready made card 'palettes'.

This activity encourages the children to look at the variety of colour in nature.

Look at all the different colours on the beach, in the water etc. Try to name all the colours seen.

Give each child / group a piece of card cut in the shape of an artists palette with pieces of double sided sticky tape arranged around the edge. The children then have to gather small pieces of different coloured materials to make up their palette. You must stress that no live material should be collected.

When back at school they can mix paints to try to match the colours of the things on their palettes and use these to paint a beach scene of the day.

Smelly Cocktails

Equipment – plastic cups and bottle of water, preferably coloured with food dye!

This is a great way to use the sense of smell and make a mess at the same time!

Give each child / group a plastic cup and explain that their cocktails will be a mixture of smells, they are not for drinking! Get them to find their own 'swizzle stick' and put a dash of coloured water in each cup to bring out the smells (tales of magic water from a far away land always add a bit of fun!) Send them off to make their own cocktails by mashing up things they find on the beach. It must be stressed that they only use small amounts and use nothing that is living! Get them to think up imaginative names for their creations then bring them back together to share their cocktails with each other and 'mingle' just like at a real cocktail party. A good way to end is to do a 'Russian salute' – gather them into a circle, get them to raise their glasses in a toast to whatever they want and after three throw the contents of their cups over their shoulders. Please warn any bystanders!



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Pebbles on a Beach

A reflective activity where the children have to sit quietly and use language to explain their feelings.

Split the group up so each child has their own space to sit in. Get them to pretend to be pebbles lying in that spot on the beach and think about how it looks, feels, smells. What stories can they tell about how they ended up there, the effects of the tide etc. Call the group back together and ask each in turn to talk about what their experience of being a pebble.

Nature Poems

A good activity to incorporate English into an outdoor visit.

Place the children around the beach or a specific object (rock, rockpool, strandline) and get them to look at it from their different angles, some close, some distant. Ask each to give 2 words that sum up what they see. Write these words down then re-group the children and ask them to make up a poem between them that uses all the different words. Get each group to recite their poem to the class.