





Hello, we are **The Spark Arts for Children**...

...a busy children's art organisation (usually) based in the heart of the city of Leicester's Cultural Quarter

We promote a wide-ranging programme of work including an annual arts festival for children, artist residencies in libraries, education projects and touring new theatre productions for children. We also provide leadership and direction for the development of The City Classroom, Leicester's Cultural Education Partnership



The Spark brings together exceptional national and international artists creating work for children. The festival features theatre, dance, music, poetry, puppetry and visual & digital arts

Our Mission is to provide extraordinary experiences for children, sparking creativity and change

So, what's this Toolkit all about?

This toolkit has been put together to help guide you through some high quality creative learning resources to enable you and your children to explore, experiment and enjoy some artistic adventures together. The activities are best suited to children from Reception through to KS2 (ages 4-11). The resources have been split into 3 themed packages (NATURE, RECYCLING and RHYTHM – you'll find more details a little later on in this pack, alongside the resources), in order to give some structure and consistency. Each themes has several sections – Inspiration & Introduction, Short Activities (Starters), Medium Length Activities and Longer Projects. The resources can be used as a pick 'n' mix – you choose which order you do them in, how many you do and in how much detail. You will know what your children will enjoy, how long they can focus for and what will get the best out of them – we are here to provide you with lots of high-quality options to support this. Activities cover a variety of art forms – from music to mark making and poetry to painting

To give you something REALLY exciting to work towards, we are also offering your children* the opportunity to achieve their **DISCOVER Arts Award** – a creative qualification... with a certificate to be proud of too!

What is an Arts Award?

Arts Awards are a range of unique qualifications that support anyone aged up to 25 to **grow as** artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to **connect** with and **take part** in the wider arts world through taking challenges in an art form

Arts Award DISCOVER is the first of these awards. To achieve it, children need to collect evidence of their experiences of taking part in arts activities, researching artists sharing their arts discoveries

A special certificate is awarded (by Trinity College London) upon successful completion of an Arts Award. Spark will help with that – details of what to do can be found on the Arts Awards booklets and we will even cover the cost of the certificates and post them to you. All you need to do is choose a nice frame to display it in!



Join *The Spark's Creative Learning Toolkit Group* and share your creations, experiences and feedback

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DISCOVER... RECYCLING

AGE 1

Using objects from around the home, that are on the verge of hopping into the bin, you will go on a journey of exploration, imagination and re-appropriation to create new and exciting artworks from old, unwanted 'rubbish'

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These links will lead you to some well put together, free activities that can be used to inspire further creative adventures. We think they're great, so we thought we would tag them on as a little extra!

DISCOVER Arts Award

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Introduction to your Arts Awards journey, how to record your adventures and submit your work for a certificate













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DISCOVER ... NATURE

This 'package' focuses on using the natural environment and resources that can be found in any garden / park to explore creativity and make art. You can explore famous artists who create art using natural materials and use their work to inspire your own!



Inspiration & Introduction

The resources below are to be used as inspiration to introduce artists and the sort of artwork you might produce when using the resources that follow...



Andy Goldsworthy – artist. Land and Environmental Art (resource)

An introduction to the artwork of famous land artist, Andy Goldsworthy. The video is just over 2 minutes long and shows a variety of his artworks and demonstrates the different materials he uses. It is set to music and has no words. (NB You will need to skip the adverts at the start of the YouTube clip)



Inspiration and Examples of Land Art for Children (resource)

A lovely Pinterest board to display and refer to for lots of visual stimulus



Land Art for Kids – How to do Land Art (resource)

A step by step resource explaining in simple terms what land art is and how to do it

Short Activities (Starters)

These activities are intended to set the scene for a longer task and should be used as a tool to inspire discussion around key themes. These activities can be expanded but are intended to last 15minutes or less



Simple Leaf Rubbing (<u>resource</u>)

A simple activity to explore leaves of different shapes and size, using wax crayons and plain paper. Explore shape, size, texture and colour and encourage experimentation with creating patterns and layering















STORM – Body Percussion & Drama game



Use this <u>YouTube clip</u> as stimulus – it shows a choir creating the sounds of a storm building, using just their bodies and is really impressive! (NB You will need to skip the adverts at the start of the clip)

Following instructions and using just their bodies and voices, children build up a 'storm'. The teacher / leader will introduce different sound effects, one by one, with accompanying movements. Children to copy, standing in a circle. Activity should build to a crescendo and die back down to silence. For example:

- It was still and quiet. A gentle breeze was heard
 (Teacher rubs hands together. Children to her right gradually join in)
- The breeze grew louder (Rub more vigorously)
- A patter of rain was heard (Tap fingers on palms)
- It began to thunder (Stamp feet)
- And then there were flashed of lightening (Big claps)

This is reversed, dropping one noise at a time until all is quiet. More sounds and movements can be added, children can move around the space to be like the wind etc.

Medium Length Activities

Explorative activities to support learning about using natural materials to create creative tools / artwork and exploring the work of famous artists. These activities can last between 30mins – 2 hours, depending on the depth of exploration



Make Nature's Paintbrushes (<u>resource</u>)

Collect natural materials from your garden / playground / park to make paintbrushes and explore lots of different natural materials and the marks they make



Salt Paintings (<u>resource</u>)

A simple activity using PVA glue to 'draw', covering this with table salt and then using watercolour paints to create colourful textured paintings. This activity will need to be done over 2 sessions as the glue / salt will need to be allowed time to dry before painting



Make Mandalas (<u>resource</u>)

Using natural resources to create circular patterns – you can use leaves, stones, shells, petals, sand, sticks... If outdoor space is tricky and you can't make a large artwork on the floor, you could do smaller versions on a tuff tray or table top



Leaf Animals (<u>resource</u>)

Collect leaves of different shapes and sizes and use them (and some googly eyes!) to create different animals. Or you could make up your own imaginary creatures!



Acting Like Animals (discussion and drama activity)

Talk with your children about the different things they see in nature. Big and small rocks, trickling streams and flowing rivers, beautiful flowers and towering trees, a gentle breeze and a powerful storm













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The class can begin to make shapes and balance like flowers and trees, tumble and roll through a river, make strong shapes like rocks, wind intensity can be used as a scale for the strength and speed of their movements. Throughout use movement which stretches the body to warm up

Ask the children - what animals do you like? An answer might be a dog. You can guide them through the movements of a dog - wagging of tails, chasing a tail, sniffing objects, running excitedly. Explore different animal movements from suggestions from your class. Give encouragement for well thought-out movements which reflect true movement of animals. Do not allow any sounds, so that the class focus on the movement of the animals, rather than the sound they make. To extend this exercise you can introduce that the animals can now interact with each other, how do they behave? Are they friendly? Cautious?

If working with a larger group, take this one step further by asking children to get into small groups and create small scenes. Groups can choose their favourite animal and create a group movement, some students can be the animals, others could be the trees and the rivers and rocks explored during the warm up. How do different animals respond to each other and their environment?

Longer Projects

Intended to use the skills learnt from the shorter activities to develop bigger projects, bringing lots of ideas together, to create land art. This could be used to let the children do a final presentation or exhibition to share what they have discovered about nature and land art



Storytelling and Nature – Trees (resource)



A full series of session plans, all themed around trees, using arts and drama to explore. This resource is comprehensive and a good level of detail to make it an easy to use learning tool. Particular highlights are the drama game 'Journey of a Tree' and the drawing activity 'The Great Chalk Tree'



Create your own piece of Land Art

Using the techniques learnt through doing the other activities, set children a challenge to design and create their own piece of land art. It can be big or small, outside or inside, as long as natural materials are used



Tell a Story with Sounds (resource)

You can do a lot with sounds alone, and no words. This activity allows children to explore sound and re-creating specific sounds to tell or re-tell a story. The activity suggests using a wordless story (eg The Snowman) as stimulus. There is a YouTube clip embedded into this resource which shows the work of 'Foley' artists – this is a profession which uses objects to recreate sound for mobbing pictures, mainly in the film industry and is amazing to see!













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DISCOVER ... RHYTH

Explore music making with everyday objects and material, discover what music LOOKS like and explore sound in a whole spectrum of ways



Inspiration & Introduction

The resources below are to be used as inspiration to introduce artists and the sort of artwork you might produce when using the resources that follow...



Wassily Kandinsky – artist (resource)



This cartoon that explains Kandinsky's work in a fun way (a little twee, but nice and simple!). Kandinsky created paintings that represented music – different shapes and colours relate to different instruments and sounds. The cartoon is 7mins19. As it's on YouTube you will need to skip the adverts at the start



An Animation of Kandinsky's Composition VIII (resource)



A very short (51 secs), well-crafted animation which brings one of Kandinsky's paintings to life through music beats. Great to watch several times over and discuss the different sounds linking to the different shapes and movements



The Artist who paints what she hears... Melissa McCracken (resource)



'Melissa McCracken thought everyone associated colours with music the same way she did. But she soon realised that her senses were unique'

A short YouTube video (as ever, you'll need to skip the adverts at the start) looking at artist Melissa McCracken and how a condition called 'synaesthesia' means that when she hears music she sees colour and vice versa. You can also see more examples of her artwork on her website.



Body Percussion to create Rhythm (<u>resource</u>)

An amazing choreographed performance from The Percussion Show, using their bodies to create a rhythm - inspiration for the activities that follow where the body is used as an instrument









Music





Short Activities (Starters)

These activities are intended to set the scene for some music and creative activity – lively and physical, mostly just using body and voice!



Mexican Clap - drama game



Students sit in a Drama circle and the idea is to send a clap around the circle just like a Mexican wave

They each have to clap one after another and try to send the clap around as quickly as possible, without any errors

To focus their attentions, set an initial time for them to beat. Give them 3 attempts to improve on their time. You can even revisit this in later sessions and keep a record of fastest times



Up, Down, Freeze



Players walk about the space without touching. Teacher calls out commands and players must respond, as follows:

- UP stand still with arms raised in the air
- DOWN crouch down on the ground
- FREEZE stand perfectly still and silent
- ONE LEG stand on one leg!
- HEADS put hands on head
- SHOULDERS put hands on shoulders
- TURN turn and face in the opposite direction
- GO continue moving

Players who respond late, or incorrectly, are eliminated and must sit down. Others then work around them. Continue until you have a winner or winners. Great for following instructions, memory, concentration, physical skills.



Rhythm Play Express – Dave 'Stickman' Higgins (resource)

A variety of rhythmic songs created by one of The Spark's Artists in Residence, Dave 'Stickman' Higgins. This project was produced with foundation stage children in mind, but isn't restricted to this age group. Each song encourages physical movement, vocal repetition and participation (it's worth listening to tracks ahead of using them in order to get together any materials you may need eg. Cushions for 'Cushion Mountain')













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Medium Length Activities

Explorative activities to support learning about using natural materials to create creative tools / artwork and exploring the work of other artists. These activities can last between 30mins – 2 hours, depending on the depth of exploration



Creating Art to Music (<u>resource</u>)



A gentle step by step guide into unlocking your senses and learning how to listen to and respond to different sounds. This can be used as a practice activity for the following one...



Mark Making to Music



Give children a variety of interesting (dry) mark making resources to use – chalk/charcoal, chunky crayons, glitter pens, highlighter pens etc. Discussion the term 'mark making' and model some examples for them to refer to, thinking aloud while doing so (you can do this to music after the initial explanation too). Ask them to respond with marks to the different 'songs' below. You can talk about feelings, emotions, shapes, colours etc throughout this activity.

Suggested songs:

(Upbeat) <u>Happy</u> by Pharell Williams (Official music video on YouTube)

(Classical) *The Beautiful Danube* by Johann Strauss

(Jazz) *Kind of Blue* (album) by Miles Davies – This is the full album, just play a few minutes. (NB. You will need to skip the ads on YouTube)

(Disney) <u>Circle of Life</u> from The Lion King - (NB. You will need to skip the ads on YouTube) (Relaxing) <u>Relaxing music</u> – rainforest sounds, birdsong etc

(Funk/Afrobeat) <u>Yaaba Funk</u> – any of the songs in the link will work!



Make your own instrument (resource)

Collect a range of materials such as empty bottles, jars, tubs, tins, elastic bands, string and cardboard tubs. You may need some rice, pasta or beads too if you choose to make shakers. The resource suggested (Pinterest board) provides lots of ideas on how to turn these bits and bobs into instruments... challenge children to be inventive and see what they can create...

OR

Explore what sounds you can make with existing objects around you - hunt around the classroom / kitchen for objects that can be used to create different sounds (eg saucepan drums)



Soundbox Tutorial (resource)

This is a great resource, using the free, online code editor Scratch to create and control different sounds by making your own 'sound box'. Most suitable to upper KS2 children and some experience of using Scratch would be useful (you can play around with this and there are two more activities that are simpler examples of activities – Grow Art and Monster Machine here)













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Longer Projects

Intended to use the skills learnt from the shorter activities to develop bigger projects, bringing lots of ideas together. This could be used to let the children do a final presentation or exhibition to share what they have discovered



Classroom / Household Percussion (resource)



The resource is a YouTube video of a group of young people, sat around a table, using household objects and their bodies to create a rhythm together – it starts with one sound and builds up

Using items found in the classroom / home explore what sounds they make, their pitch, tone and think about all the different ways they can be played with to make different sounds. Experiment with bringing different objects and sounds together to either replicate an existing rhythm (you could use a simple nursery rhyme like *London Bridge* or *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* as a starting point) or compose your own!

OR

You can build upon the 'Make your own Instrument' activity and create your own set of instruments to create / recreate a song – this could be done alone or in small groups



Create a Wall of Sound



Building upon the 'Mark Making to Music' activity. You will need a large wall space to do this, where you can work from the floor, up to standing / reaching up level. Cover the wall in paper / cardboard, with enough space for your group to stand side by side and work together. As an alternative, this could be done on the floor / playground using chalks

Ask children to sit / kneel on the floor and give them all suitable mark making materials to use (wax crayons / chalks / highlighters etc) Start with a calm genre of music (eg relaxing or classical) and ask children to make marks at the bottom of the paper in response. Next, ask them to kneel. Change the music tempo – this time choose jazz – and ask them to mark make above their previous drawings to this. Then, ask them to stand and repeat the process to a funk track. Finally, ask them to reach up and mark make to an upbeat song. The result should be a collaborative, visual wall of sound – moving from gentle to expressive marks. There's no right or wrong and you can experiment with different mark making materials, different orders of songs etc to see what different responses you get. This activity is all about encouraging expression and seeing how others respond – working side by side on a collaborative 'artwork' is a great experience too and gives plenty of space for discussion and teamwork













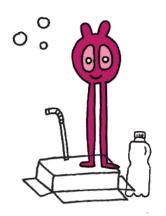
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DISCOVER... RECYCLI

Using objects from around the home, that are on the verge of hopping into the bin, you will go on a journey of exploration, imagination and reappropriation to create new and exciting artworks from old, unwanted 'rubbish'



Inspiration & Introduction

The resources below are to be used as inspiration to introduce artists and the sort of artwork you might produce when using the resources that follow...



Recycled Flowers (resource)

Use this Pinterest board for inspiration of different materials and shapes of flower as a simple way of demonstrating a variety of possibilities for creating something with found materials



Michelle Reader – artist (<u>resource</u>)

Nottinghamshire-based artist who used recycled materials to create sculptures Focus on creating flowers from discarded materials



Jane Perkins – artist (resource)

Jane creates incredible artworks with found objects - including recreating famous works of art, such as Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers'. You may be interested to take a look at some of the projects she has done with schools as inspiration for what you might like to try to aim towards.

Short Activities (Starters)

These activities are intended to open up children's thinking about different objects, their forms and what they are used for - setting the scene for re-appropriating recycled materials and turning them into something new!



10 Second Objects - Drama Game (<u>resource</u>)

Small groups make the shape of an object using their bodies – in only ten seconds!



Two Sticks - Drama Game

In a circle, introduce an object such as an empty cardboard tube. Declare that it could be lots of different things, for example, an elephant's trunk (and model it being one!) Pass the object around the circle with each player turning it into something new (no repeats) and saying one line of dialogue such as "This elephant's trunk can squirt water" Give reluctant participants two options. They may say "Pass," if they can't think of anything, or "Come back to me," if they think they will have an idea later. If you find that players are nervous, play a few rounds with the same object until the group have had at least one turn. Repeat with different objects, some good ones are – a ball, a bucket, a hula hoop and a towel













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Medium Length Activities

Explorative activities to support learning about using natural materials to create creative tools / artwork and exploring the work of other artists. These activities can last between 30mins – 2 hours, depending on the depth of exploration



Recycled Flowers (resource)

Look again at the website of artist Michelle Reader. Focus on her work creating plants and flowers from recycled materials and use this as inspiration to create your own – you can use cardboard, envelopes, bottle tops, egg boxes, straws, lolly sticks... anything you can find! You can use a simple flower shape template to support younger children. Think about creating different types of flowers – what shape are their petals and leaves? Do they have trumpets or stamens? You can use this activity to introduce new vocabulary too!



Paper Palace (<u>resource</u>)

One of The Spark's Artists in Residence, Sophie Cullinan, is producing a new series of online workshops all themed around paper and materials you can easily find in any home to create art and creative games. All episodes can be watched on The Spark's YouTube channel



Ideas for (simple) Under the Sea Creature Crafts (resource)

A series of simple craft projects to create (mainly animals) from a small collection of recycled materials. With the options presented, an 'Under the Sea' theme could be set and use the octopus, shark, fish and jellyfish and then bring them all together to create a display



Create your own Recycled Seed Paper (resource)

Use recycled paper to create your own paper, scattered with seeds (cress seeds are ideal as they grow quickly!) to plant and grow. You could use this idea to create a special card of postcard to send to a friend / family member













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Longer Projects

Intended to use the skills learnt from the shorter activities to develop bigger projects, bringing lots of ideas together. This could be used to let the children do a final presentation or exhibition to share what they have discovered



Create a Recycled Garden

Using recycled materials and the skills you have learnt, work as a team to create a beautiful recycled garden, filled with plants, flowers, butterflies and insects. You can use a large empty box for the base of your garden, or (if in school) you could create a wall display to brighten up your classroom!



Produce a Collaborative Artwork



Use <u>Jane Perkins</u>' work as a stimulus to produce a group artwork using found materials – bottle tops, beads, buttons, old bits of fabric etc. Take a detailed look at some of her artwork and discuss the materials used, how they have been used and why the artist has chosen them (colour, shape, texture). Agree a simple design (this could be your school logo, an animal or a simple rainbow) and recreate it together, each child working on a section or with a specific materials. Encourage discussion, teamwork and cooperation. Talk through the process together and problem solve as a team



Create a Recycled Puppet to tell a Story



Use this fantastic <u>YouTube compilation video</u> as inspiration for creating puppets from recycled materials



Use either the Night Zoo Keeper's Magical Animal Creator (resource – free download) or create a simple recycled robot puppet (resource) to create a character for your own story. Children can work alone or in groups to create a simple story or poem about recycling together, or they may just like to use the puppet as a way of sharing what they have learnt about recycling and making art with recycled materials. The intention is for them to be imaginative, use materials creatively and be able to talk about their learning

Extention Task

Eco-Schools project (resource)

It's not essential to look at this from the perspective of becoming an Eco School but this pack contains some great resources to use and some excellent learning points to raise children's awareness on waste and recycling. Lots of suggested activities for both KS1 and 2













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EXTRA Recommended Resources

The links below will lead you to some well put together, free activities that can be used to inspire further creative adventures. We think they're great, so we thought we would tag them on as a little extra!



(KS2) Powerful Words – Top Tips for Teachers - Poetry Toolkit (<u>resource</u>)

A great resource to help teachers / parents to support poetic writing, written by renowned Leicester-based poet John Berkavitch (AKA Owen Griffiths) This YouTube video (just over 8mins) helps you to further this learning and begin to edit poetry to improve it



Sensory Atelier at Home – Attenborough Arts Centre (SEND resource)

A simple activity booklet comprising creative activities for young people with SEND to explore at home, experimenting with colour and exploring different materials



Night Zoo Keeper – Creative Writing Pack (<u>resource</u> – free download)

This PDF resource pack is the perfect way to get your kids excited about creative writing. It includes extracts from the very first story of the Night Zookeeper and his journey into the magical Night Zoo. 10 lessons – 55 pages!



(KS1) Poetry Activities from The Book Trust (<u>resource</u>)

This set of activities focuses on sounds and using them to inspire poems. Nice, simple activities



(KS2) Poetry Activity from The Book Trust (<u>resource</u>)

This resource looks at Michael Rosen's poem 'I Wake Up' as a stimulus followed by a series of activities, building up to supporting children to write their own poems



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Art is Where the Home is – Arts Activity Pack (<u>resource</u>)

Created by a group of famous artists (including Anthony Gormley, Bob & Roberta Smith and Gillian Wearing). There are some lovely activities, presented in a friendly format which displays the artists' individual styles.



For the month of June 2020, The Wildlife Trust is launching a challenge to do 'something wild' each day, for 30 days. You can sign up to receive the free pack via the link provided













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DISCOVER Arts Award

Arts Award DISCOVER is a creative qualification, accredited by Trinity College London. To achieve it, children need to collect evidence of their experiences of taking part in arts activities, researching artists sharing their arts discoveries. It's simple to collect this evidence, and we are providing a resource to prompt this through a special activity 'log book', which you can download to print yourself or request a printed copy of via nicola@thesparkarts.co.uk

There are 3 sections to the award - DISCOVER, FIND OUT and SHARE

Discover

Children need to look at, be able to identify and understand a range of art forms – as simple as a discussion about 'what is art?' and looking at a variety of examples together and talking about each one – painting, music, drama, dance, sculpture, fashion, design etc.

Find Out

Focussing on one particular artist/group and finding out more about their work – we have suggested artists to look at in each of our themed 'packages' but you don't have to stick to these – you or your children may have other ideas and that's great!

Share

A chance for the children to talk about what they have done and learnt about during their creative adventure and to share the work they've made with others – family, friends, teachers, classmates – it can be just one other person in an informal chat or a presentation to a group, it's flexible and just a lovely way to celebrate and consolidate what they have learnt.

Overall, the awards aim to encourage creative exploration, discovery, enjoyment and communication

Certficates

Upon completion of the award, you will need to share the log books / evidence with Nicola @ The Spark (who is an Arts Awards Assessor) and she will be able to check everything has been completed as it needs to be... which, if you have followed the tips above and used some of the suggested resources, it will be spot on! You can email nicola@thesparkarts.co.uk to discuss how you'd like to share the work – she can have a video call with you for a 'show and tell' or give you a postal address, we are happy to do whatever is easiest and most efficient for you!

Once you've been given the thumbs up, we will need details for each child to request their special DISCOVER Arts Awards certificates (full names and date of birth) This data is only used for the certificates and nothing else and the process is fully GDPR compliant. Once received, the certificates will be forwarded on to your requested school / home address for you to award to your children and celebrate their achievements!



Join *The Spark's Creative Learning Toolkit Group* and share your creations, experiences and feedback



"Creativity is contagious, pass it on"

Albert Einstein



www.thesparkarts.co.uk

