



Cymru
National Day Nurseries Association

Factsheet

A photograph of a woman and three young children sitting at a table, engaged in a painting activity. The woman, with long brown hair and wearing a white top, is smiling and looking down at the children. The children, two girls and one boy, are focused on their work. They are using various colored markers and paints on large sheets of paper. The background is a bright, colorful wall with green and orange sections. The image is partially covered by a teal overlay at the bottom.

Foundation Phase - Big Pictures

Wales

Foundation Phase – Big Pictures

Creative play and imaginative experiences play a central role in children's learning and development in the early years. Within the Foundation Phase, children's creativity is encouraged with free-flowing creative activities and supported with enthusiasm from adults. Practitioner interaction can support self-esteem with descriptive praise, which can encourage children to keep going with their creative play. E.g. 'I like the colours that you have used' 'It's great that you have used paints as well as material'

Children like to be spontaneous in their creative play and planning for creative experiences should be child-led. There can be times when children require adults to be more actively involved in guiding the play to further develop their skills and understanding, but practitioners must still allow children control of their artistic vision. Historically within the early years, creative development was a process of children creating or reproducing something that followed a specific template or format and all end products were almost identical. The finished product was often considered more important than the process. This is not the principle for Creative development within the Foundation Phase.

The process of creativity should be the focus and it is equally important to share the message with children that there's more than one way to do something when approaching creative development activities. E.g. there is more than one way to draw a car, build a bridge or play a drum. In this case- there is more than one way to design and create a big picture. These messages are integral to help children understand that they don't have to conform to anyone else's ideas, they can have an idea and they can go their own way to follow through with it.

This session focuses on allowing children to experiment with a range of artistic resources, equipment, and techniques

Learning objective

- To experience artistic freedom
- To make choices with equipment and resources
- To produce a 'big picture' piece of art.

Areas of Learning - (Skills and Range)

Creative Development

Range:

- Use a wide range of resources and stimuli
- Experience art, craft, design from Wales and other cultures.

Skills:

- Explore and experiment with a variety of techniques and materials
- Make choices when choosing materials and resources
- Mix, shape, arrange and combine materials to create their own images and objects that communicate and express their ideas, feelings, and memories creatively
- Use a variety of materials and tools for experimentation.

Literacy - e.g., mark-making, using specific vocabulary, understanding and using simple questions, listening and responding.

Numeracy - e.g. counting, prepositions and movement, 2D shapes and symmetry, comparing and ordering, matching pairs and pictures, using mathematical language.

Resources

- Items for provocation e.g. photographs, artworks, magazines, postcards
- Extra-large pieces of paper or fabric- A0/A1 size or larger if possible! (Plain rolls of wallpaper etc. could be used)
- Aprons, old shirts, etc.
- Paint
- Palettes, buckets, pots, and trays
- Spatulas, sponges, rollers, stamps, cotton wool, items with wheels
- Brushes, rollers, toothbrushes, nail brushes, brooms
- Crayons, markers, charcoal
- Strings, ribbon, sticks
- Paper in different sizes, textures, shapes, colours
- Glue
- Scissors
- Natural materials e.g. leaves, soil, shells, twigs, gravel, wood shavings, flower petals

- Recycled materials e.g. plastics, cork, wrappers, plastic bottle tops, yogurt pots/lids.

N.B. This is not an exhaustive list; neither is it a list of requirements. Include whatever art and creative resources you feel would enthuse and engage the children within your setting.

Activity outline

As the name of this activity suggests, 'Big Pictures' require ample space either indoors or out, where children can be creative without concerns about being too messy. Children should also have the opportunity to complete this activity on the floor, if possible. This will support the freedom of their artistic movements. It is vitally important to balance the adult-led aspect of this activity to ensure the children are able to follow their own creative instincts in order to build their confidence and independence. However, when children ask for help, provide technical assistance to ensure they do not become frustrated or demotivated. All learning opportunities should be planned with the children's individual needs, interests, and learning characteristics in mind. Some children may require further support in making sure they can access all the resources. Painting is very much a tactile sensory experience and for some children getting messy can be distressing, be sure to consider this when planning creative learning opportunities.

Continuous and enhanced provision

- Ensure children always have access to a range of creative resources that they can freely access. E.g. painting, mark-making, 3d craft, clay, etc.
- Allow opportunities for children to take more ownership over their materials. E.g. provide the opportunity for children to mix their own powder paints, have water easily accessible, etc.
- Incorporate a wide range of resources, materials, and equipment within your creative area, including the use of recycled materials
- Include a variety of objects, items, and visuals for inspiration e.g. a vase of flowers in springtime, photographs from a recent walk with the children, mirrors for self-portraits, etc.
- Ensure you include time to demonstrate to children how certain resources are used and techniques that can be applied within the creative area
- Allow opportunities for children to leave their work untouched at lunchtime/the end of a session if possible, if they want to return back to it
- Include a range of artistic/creative themed books across the setting, both in the book area and the creative area

- Provide stimuli that offer children opportunities to use all their senses. E.g. Play music, include scented materials/objects/resources, etc.

Focused task

Ensure that you complete a risk assessment and have demonstrated previously to the children, how to use the creative equipment and resources safely and appropriately.

- Prepare the area by setting up the large paper/material and setting up the creative resources. Consider including some example works that you or your staff have completed (could be a good staff meeting activity!)
- In a small group, introduce the children to the provocations you have chosen that centre around their interests or the theme you are currently following. Encourage questions and comments from the children
- Explain to the children that you will be making 'Big Pictures' today and show the children the paper/material and go through the equipment available
- Support the children to put on their aprons/overalls and emphasise that this is their artist's uniform. (Including some form of hats can be a good way to engage and excite children in a particular activity)
- Put on some music- this could be linked to the interests/themes you are following. (You can use the music as a reference for the children as to when they are free to create, when the music is playing, or stop and listen when the music stops)
- Set the children off! Observe the equipment, the resources, and the techniques the children use and make notes on how this could inform future planning. E.g. children may show skills lacking in using certain equipment, so you may wish to plan an activity to support this
- Allow the children to be as creative as possible. This activity is all about freedom for the children. Freedom to choose what they want to use and how to use it
- Comment on the children's work and techniques to introduce and affirm creative and artistic vocabulary. E.g. 'I like the big brush strokes you are using!' 'Wow you have mixed a bright colour!' 'That is an interesting pattern!'
- Be cautious not to question the children continuously about what they are doing, it is important to allow the children to creatively explore without having to consider why they are doing certain things. However, you can ask the children after they have finished, to describe what they did and which aspects they enjoyed most and why
- As the children are given complete artistic freedom within this activity, it is important not to intervene and offer support only when it is required. Allow the children to determine when they are finished and accept their decision, whether you agree or not.

Welsh language development

- Brush – **brwsh**
- Brushing – **brwshio**
- Paint – **paent**
- Painting – **peintio**
- Colour – **lliw**
- Recycled materials – **defnyddiau wedi’l ailgylchu**
- Colours – **lliwiau**
- Shape – **siâp**
- Art – **arlunio**
- Stroke – **strôc**
- Stamp – **stamp**
- Picture – **llun / darlun**
- Apron – **fedog**
- Glue – **glud**
- Paper – **papur**
- Finish – **gorffen**
- Natural resources – **defnyddiau naturiol.**

Extension activities

- Complete a similarly free activity for the children using 3D creative modes. E.g. have a sculpting session
- Ask children to buddy up to complete a ‘Big Picture’ and ask them to plan what they are going to do and then present it to the group
- Consider taking the children off-site to complete some big art using found materials. E.g. laying the paper/material out and using sand, sticks, stones, and shells at the beach.

Further support and NDNA resources.

- Art of Expression and Creativity- NDNA Publication - <https://bit.ly/3IghW3S>
- Natural Art- MyNDNA Activity - <https://bit.ly/3dj9dzn>
- Messy mud painting –MyNDNA Activity - <https://bit.ly/3EhC4Ah>
- Natural Art- Welsh Language Activity guide - <https://bit.ly/3pinhz2>.

Foundation Phase – Big Pictures V0.1 - August 2021



National Day Nurseries Association

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for early years

Factsheet

Our factsheets are written by early years experts for the early years workforce. Most NDNA factsheets are free to our members.

NDNA is the national charity and membership association representing children's nurseries across the UK. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability, so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours.

We are the voice of the 21,000-strong nursery sector, an integral part of the lives of more than a million young children and their families. We provide information, training and advice to support nurseries and the 250,000 people who work in them to deliver world-class early learning and childcare.

See the full range of NDNA factsheets at www.ndna.org.uk/factsheets

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