

Bear Leading Activity

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Teacher Notes and Curriculum Information

Links to The Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum.

Arts:

Encouraging children to engage with, investigate and respond to first hand experiences, memory and imagination.

The World About Us:

Encouraging children to observe and interpret their environment.

From developing a sense of place and identifying locations using maps, to using maps to describe places and environments investigated.

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding:

By developing insights into their own talents, thoughts and feelings and contrasting these with the experiences and feelings of people in other places and times.

Talking and Listening:

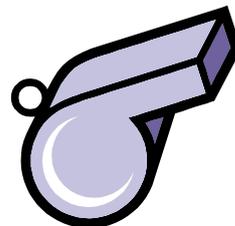
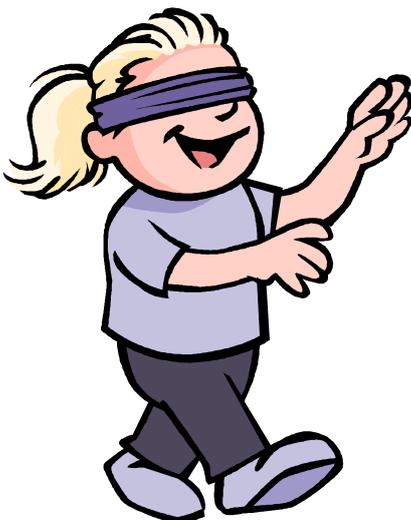
Take turns at listening in a group.

Listen to and respond to guidance and instructions.

Express thoughts, feelings and opinions in response to personal experiences and imaginary situations, curricular topics and activities.

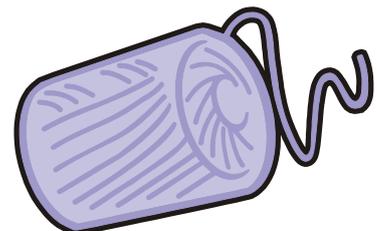
RESOURCES

1 x Blindfold (one per 2 Children or if the children are very young, they could just close their eyes)



1 x Whistle

1 x Ball of String





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Step One

Whole Class: Recap on the story of Theseus and the Minotaur.

Q: How did he escape the Maze?

Q: Could we use that strategy here?

Q: But we haven't got any string, what could we do instead?

You could also ask if they know the story of Hansel and Gretel. Elicit any ideas for an environmentally friendly trail that the birds won't eat.

Elicit ideas about giving directions from the viewing platform, having a guide etc.

Step Two

Whole Class: (N.B. This activity must be closely supervised so that the children do not get entangled in the string).

Tie the string at the entrance to the maze. As you walk through with the children, unravel the string. When you get to the centre of the maze, or when the string runs out, follow it back, rolling it up as you go.

Discuss your experiences.

Q: What would Theseus have done if his string hadn't been long enough?

Q: Did you experience any problems?

Q: Do you think it would have been possible to do the same walk, like Theseus had to do, in the dark?



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Step Three

In Groups of Four:

One child is blindfolded (or has eyes shut). Another child walks beside them giving directions as to where to go around the maze. The other 2 children stay on the viewing platform and direct. After a few minutes the teacher blows the whistle and the 2 children in the maze swap the blindfold. After a few more minutes the two halves of each group change places until every one has had a turn at each activity.

Step Four

In Pairs:

Using the maps of the maze, one child stays on the viewing platform and guides the other around the maze to visit different areas, using target language ranging from left, right, forwards, backwards to north, south, east and west, depending upon age and ability.

Give the children time after each activity to discuss their experiences. In the first two activities there are no 'right' answers, just the opportunity for the children to think through and discuss practical problems.

Step Four

Whole Class: (On return to school).

The cartoon activity in 'Theseus and the Minotaur' (Activity 2) could be repeated to represent their own experiences in the maze.



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THE STORY - Theseus and the Minotaur

A long time ago, on an island called Crete, there lived a monster. It was called the Minotaur. It had the body of a man and the head of a bull. The Minotaur ate children. King Minos of Crete ordered a special home to be built for the Minotaur. It was a labyrinth (a type of maze).

Now, King Minos had defeated the King of Athens in a war. To avoid the threat of his country being destroyed, every nine years the King of Athens would send seven boys and seven girls to King Minos as a sacrifice. King Minos would then send the fourteen young people from Athens into the labyrinth. No one ever came out of the labyrinth alive.

The King of Athens had a son called Theseus. Theseus was horrified when he learnt why the boys and girls were being sent to Crete. He decided to go to Crete as one of the prisoners and kill the Minotaur.

Now, King Minos had a daughter named Ariadne. When she saw Theseus, she fell in love with him and decided she would help him to defeat the Minotaur. Ariadne gave Theseus a ball of string and told him to tie it to the entrance of the labyrinth. He unwound it as he went through the passages, so that he could follow it back out again.

When Theseus found the Minotaur, he killed it with one blow of his sword. Then he quickly wound up the string and led all the young people out of the labyrinth. They sailed back to Athens. They were the first people to have survived going into the Minotaur's labyrinth!