

Let's build a house

Themes

- * Building/Homes
- * Seasons/Weather/Elements
- * People Who Help Us/Occupations

Skills

- * Speech
- * Movement/Dance
- * Acting/Mime
- * Group work

Equipment/Resources

A safe, clear space in which children may move around easily; a collection of pictures of different types of houses, from books, posters and the Internet

Activity

Initiate a discussion about houses and look at pictures with the children, talking about similarities and differences, the materials that houses can be made from and the tools and machines that are used to build them. Invite children to join you in building a pretend house. Make suggestions and model movements, such as laying bricks for the walls, sawing wood for the windows and using a hammer and nails to put the window frames into place. Encourage all ideas and support children in developing mimes and using pretend props.

Ask children to describe their pretend houses and to decide whether they are making a big house or a small one, a tall, thin one, a long, low one or an unusually shaped one. They may choose to act out carrying heavy bricks or pushing them in a barrow, driving a truck or lifting heavy frames with a crane. Some of the children may be knowledgeable about

tools used in the home, such as drills, sanders and screwdrivers. Many of them will make noises to represent machinery and tools as they use them. Praise especially imaginative or realistic acts, encouraging children to share ideas and to take notice of what others are doing.

Talk about health and safety and the need to wear protective clothing, helmets, boots, pads and ear protectors when working on a building site or using noisy machinery.

Sit inside your pretend houses and talk about how well they protect you from the cold, heat, rain, snow, wind and storms. Alternatively, pretend that there is a hole in the roof and begin a new game to repair it quickly before a storm comes!

Extensions/Variations

Provide large bricks, play tools, dressing up outfits and helmets and other appropriate equipment to create a building site role-play area, preferably outside or both outdoors and indoors. Include sand and mud as building materials. Agree on some safety rules with the children, such as being aware of each other, using tools carefully, not stacking bricks too high and not putting anything into their mouths.

Encourage children to work together in groups to build pretend houses, talking about teamwork on a building site and people's different jobs and skills. Work alongside children to build homes for small world people, using a variety of different construction kits

Learning objectives/Early Learning Goals

- * Use language to imagine and recreate ideas and experiences for acting and role-play (CL-S)
- * Use talk to organize, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events when planning scenarios or performances (CL-S)
- * Develop good control and coordination in large and small movements (PD-MH)
- * Match movements and actions to the space available (PD-MH)
- * Share ideas within a group and develop imagination around a theme, showing sensitivity to others' needs and feelings and forming positive relationships (PSED-MR)
- * Follow simple safety rules, tackle new challenges and manage appropriate risks (PD-MH, HSC; PSED-SCSA)