MINI CASE STUDY: THE MAGIC IN NATURAL ART & PATTERNING

Exploring art does not always have to be in the form of paints, paintbrushes and paper… artistic beauty can take form in our natural world around us…

Transient art refers to art made from moveable resources that can be changed, open ended and can evolve from masterpiece to masterpiece.

Whilst expressing creative ideas, the children are also exploring early mathematics through engaging in this natural art work and opening opportunities for discussions around shapes, and developing new vocabulary.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) evidence store highlights that very young children are naturally curious, noticing differences in quantity and the shape of objects.

"This stone is a big round stone and yours is smaller Miss Ingle"

"My tower has 5 stones. 1,2,3,4,5 stones"

"It's taller and it's getting big"

"It looks like a pattern"

"The line is getting longer and longer"

In these images you can see some examples of how we use our environment around us and natural resources to invite the children to explore art and maths within a different context.

With our younger children, we can model how to use the resources available to them by simply lining up stones and watching them absorb what you are doing before having a go themselves. The progression to our older children that enjoy making shapes and developing their work using different materials.

WE CAN TAKE THE BEAUTY OF NATURAL ART, OUT AND ABOUT.

what does the evidence say?

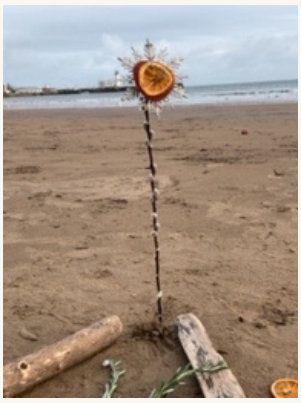
In the Early Mathematics section of the EEF evidence store, the approach of teaching and modelling how to make comparisons and connections is described in detail.

The adults role is to provide opportunities for children to make comparisons and to model and encourage children to make connections and spot patterns.

According to EEF key findings, there are some activities within this approach that can improve maths outcomes for children. These include comparing sets of objects using words, identifying the odd one out in a set of objects, arranging objects in order of size, location, or position, using ordinal numbers such as ‘first’, ‘second’, and ‘third’, and activities involving block-building or weighing scales.

The EEF highlights different practices used to teach this approach. Typical ways included commenting, prompting, or gesturing to draw attention to similarities, differences, sequences, or patterns. For example, an educator could comment how two towers of bricks, or stones, compare in terms of their height.

You can read more about approaches and practices to supporting early mathematics on the EEF evidence store website, here: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/early-mathematics



THANK YOU FOR READING.

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NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU
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