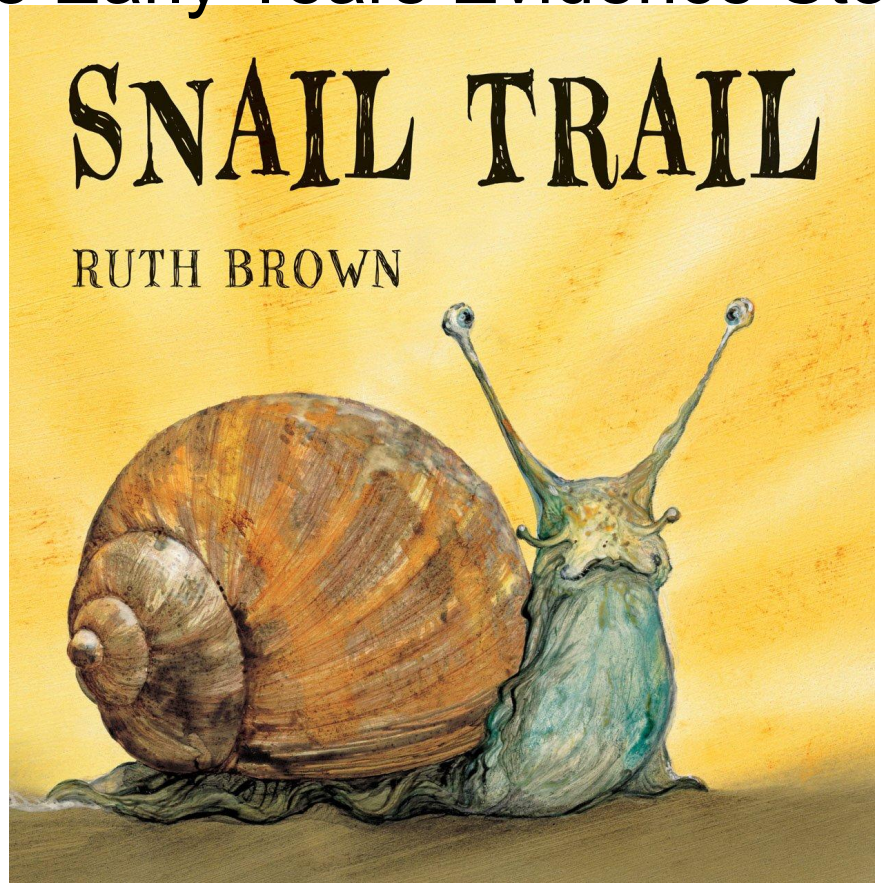
Ideas to use the book ‘Snail Trail’ to support children’s learning using the Early Years Evidence Store



Putting evidence-informed approaches into practice

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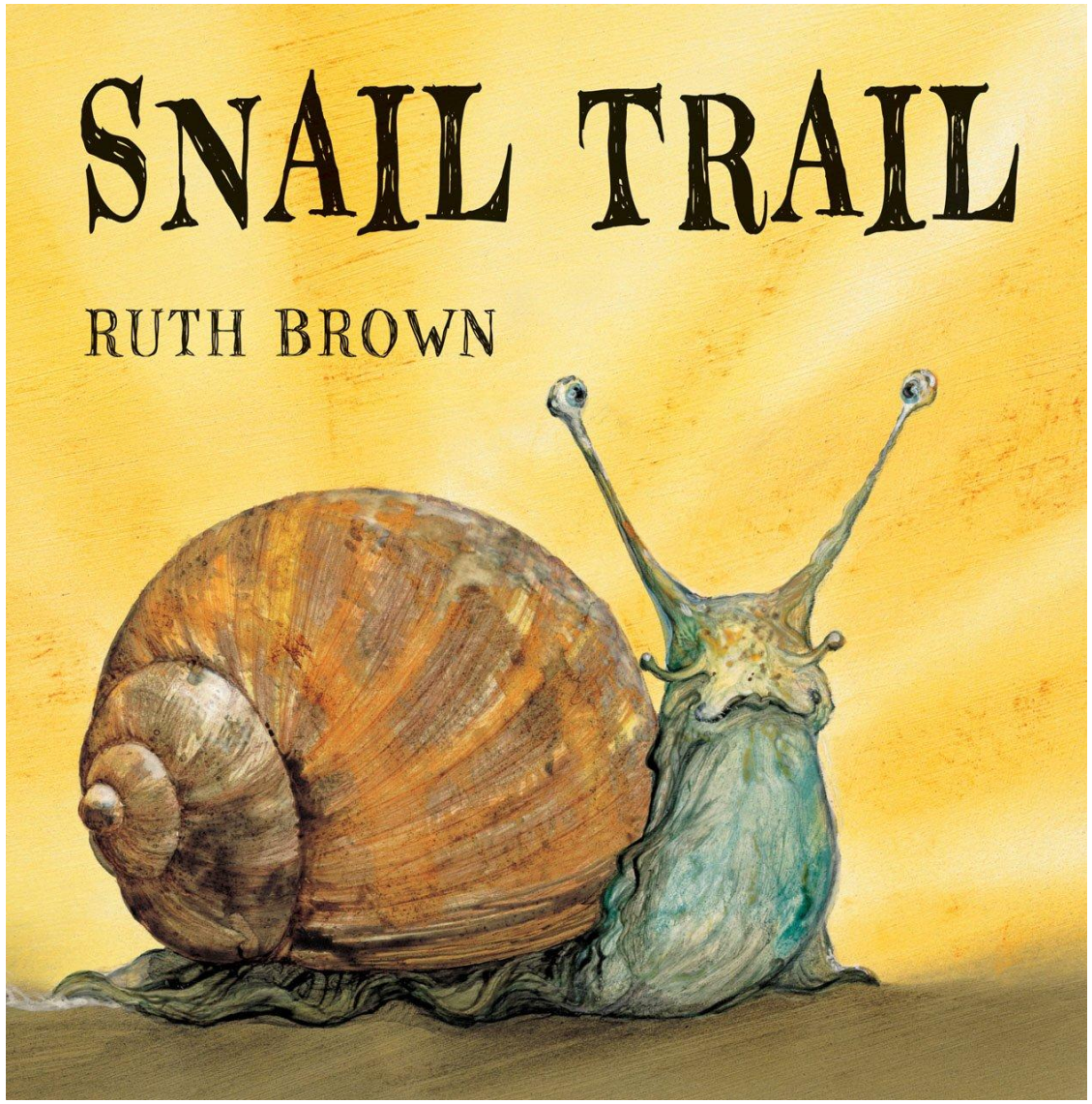

Slimy snail sets out on a trail.

But where exactly does he go?

Up a hill, over a bridge, down a slope . . .

See the world from a snail's eye-view in this delightful outdoor adventure by the acclaimed Ruth Brown, who shows that things are not always as they seem

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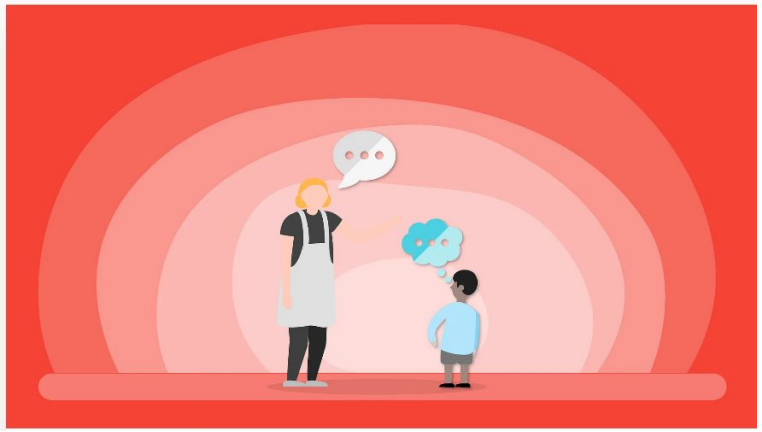
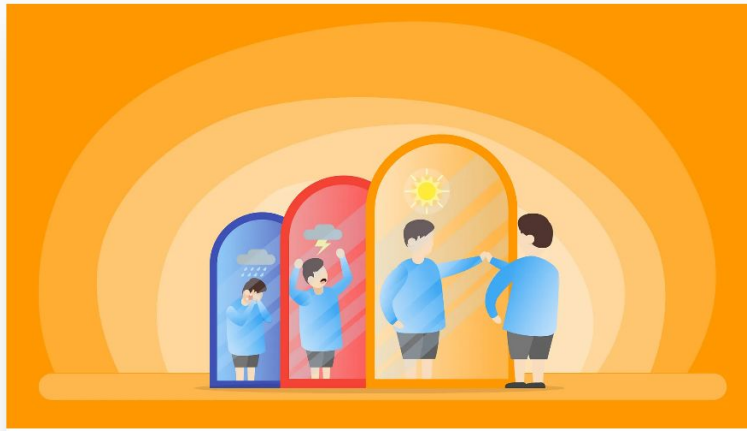
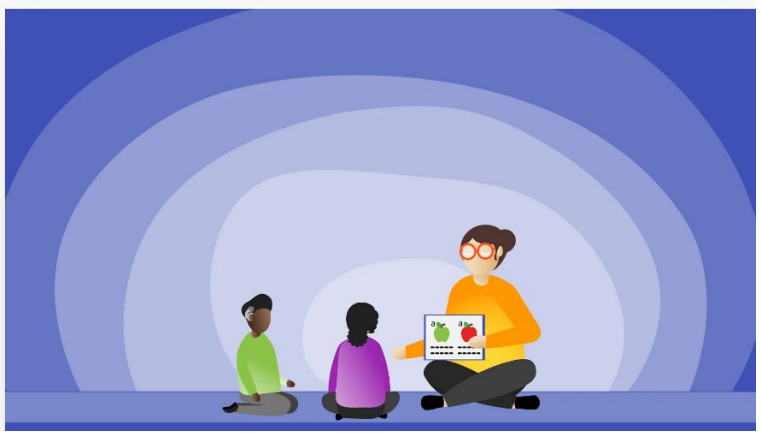
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store



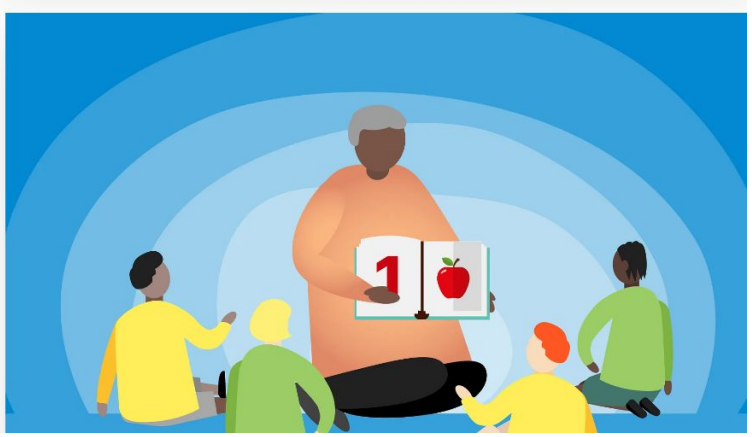
Communication and Language



Personal Social and Emotional Development



Early Literacy



Early Mathematics

Self-Regulation and Executive Function

Physical Development

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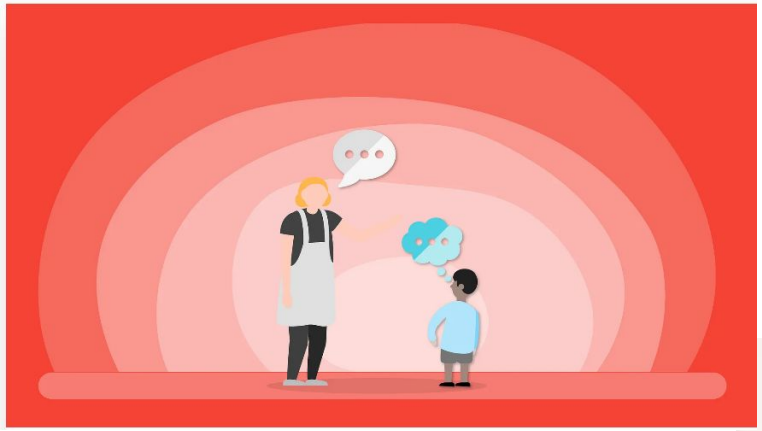

Communication and Language

Additional Vocabulary

mollusc
slither
slimy
wet
sticky
slow
mucus
trail

Teaching and Modelling Vocabulary

The intentional use of words to build a child's understanding of words (receptive vocabulary) and encourage them to use and apply it in the right context (expressive vocabulary).

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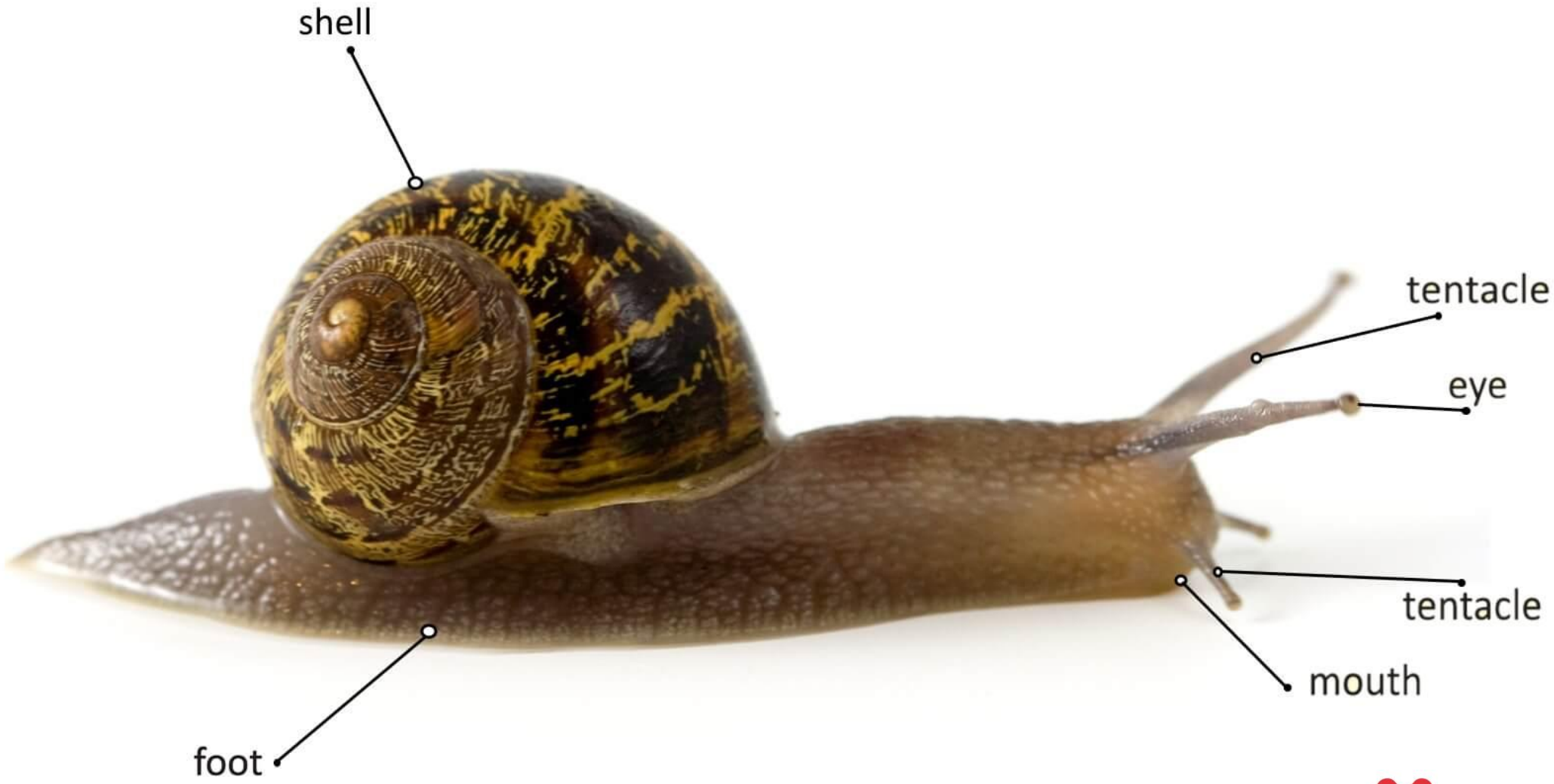
Parts of a snail



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Snail identification

Snails can be very hard to identify! This is just a rough guide showing some of the snails in the UK

Wild About Gardens

9-12mm

☐ Two-toothed door-snail

Clausilia bidentata

Up to 7.5mm

☐ Round snail

Discus rotundatus

Under 7mm

☐ Garlic snail

Oxychilus alliarius

20-24mm

☐ Brown-lipped snail

Cepaea nemoralis

16-22mm

☐ White-lipped snail

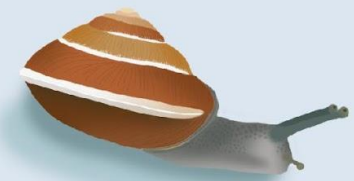
Cepaea hortensis

Up to 40mm

☐ Garden snail

Cornu aspersum

10-12mm



☐ Girdled snail

Hygromia cinctella

11-14mm

☐ Kentish snail

Monacha cantiana

6-10mm

☐ Hairy snail

Trochulus hispidus

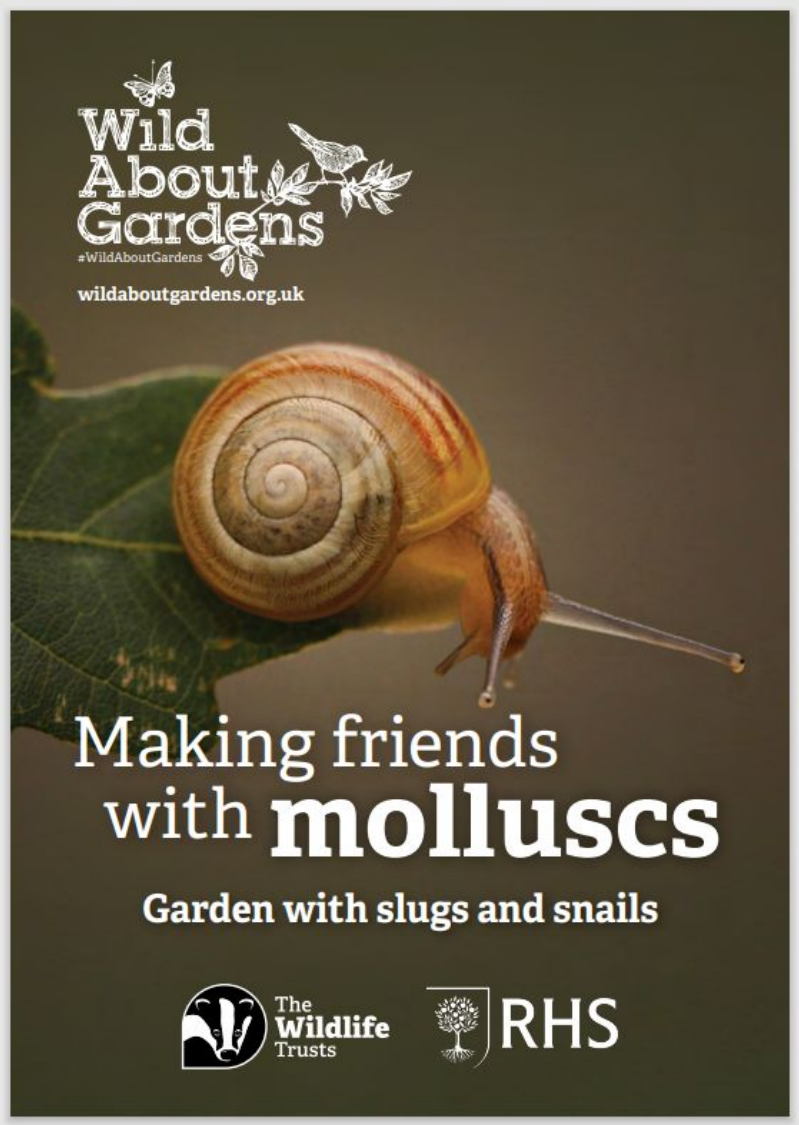
11-14mm

☐ Strawberry snail

Trochulus striolatus

www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk

Shell diameters listed in blue



Detailed Snail Facts

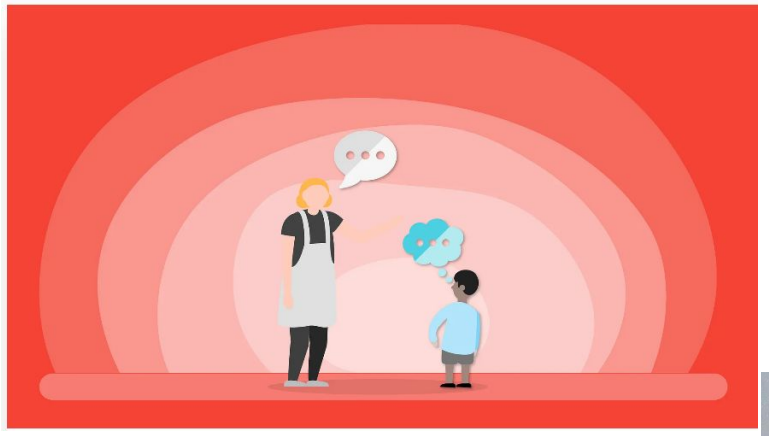
Snails are Gastropods. A gastropod is a single-shelled, soft-bodied animal in the mollusc group of animals.

The name gastropod comes from the Greek words gaster, meaning stomach, and poda, meaning feet. All gastropods have a muscular foot that they use to move around.

Snails are nocturnal.

Snail blood is called haemolymph and is a pale blue or grey colour. While vertebrates use iron to carry oxygen in the blood, which turns red when oxygen bonds, snails use copper, which turns blue when carrying oxygen.

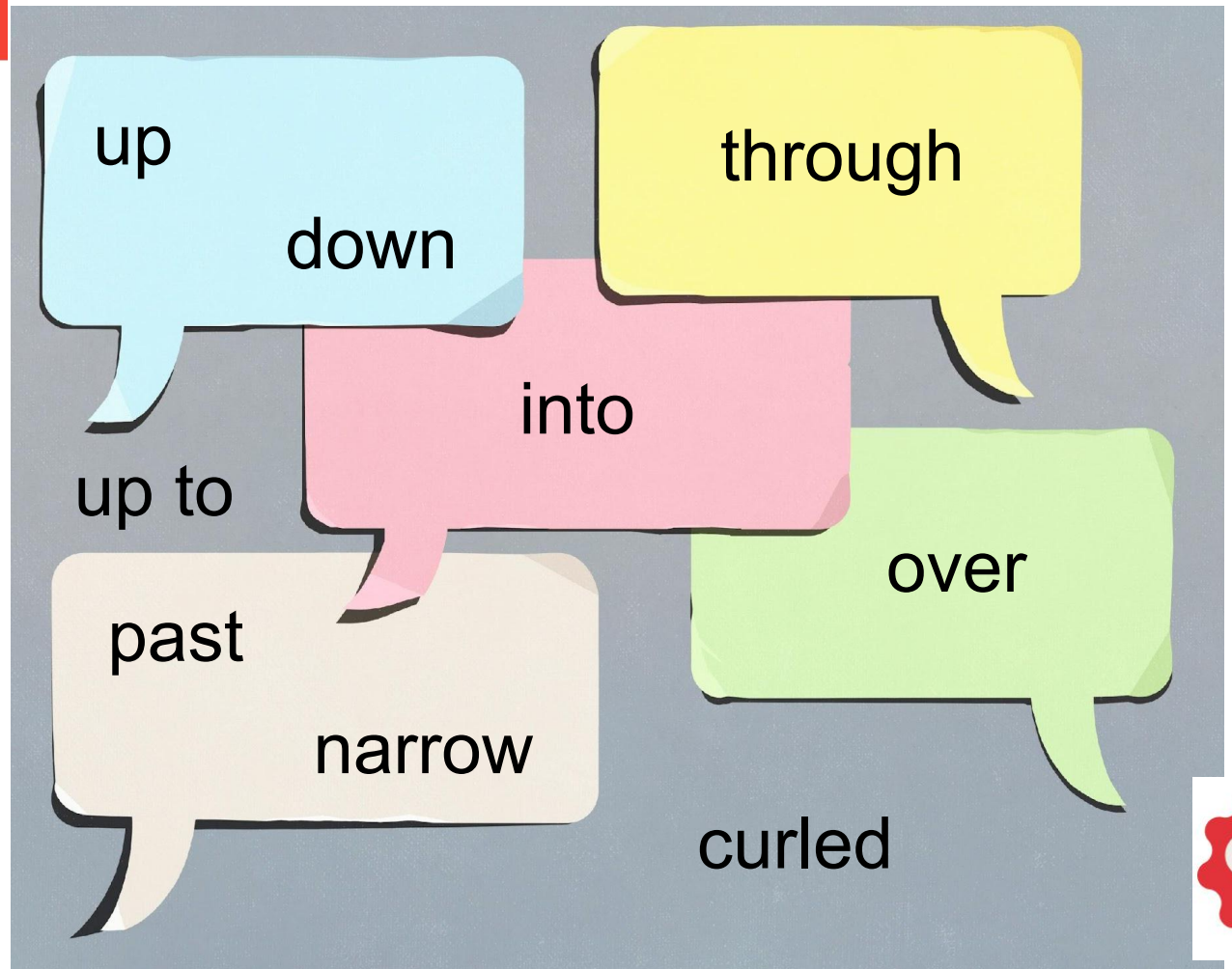
The slime trail left by snails has some of the qualities of both a glue and a lubricant. It helps the creature glide forwards when pressure is lifted, or stick to surfaces when pressure is applied. It's made from a carbohydrate mucus and a 'hygroscopic' protein – meaning that it absorbs moisture from the air, helping to prevent it from evaporating.



Communication and Language

Teaching and Modelling Language

Practices that may be effective can be either verbal or physical, and the evidence suggests that combining both kinds has the most impact…Physical strategies include story acting and using props and pictures.



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Interactive Reading Successful interventions involve spoken interactions between the reader and child that go beyond the text in the book; the more the child participates or responds, the more their oral language skills develop.

Prompt-based practices:
Questioning: The adult uses open-ended questioning to elicit a response from the child and provide opportunity for them to use language.

Recalling of events or experiences: The adult facilitates a conversation about events that have happened in the past or an event that will happen in the future that connects to the book.

Completion: The adult leaves a blank at the end of a sentence for the child to complete.

Posing suggestions or problems: The adult may model language such as "Imagine if...", "I wonder...", "what would happen if..." etc.

Imitation: The adult encourages the child to imitate the language that they've just modelled to the child. The child gets to apply the new knowledge they've heard.

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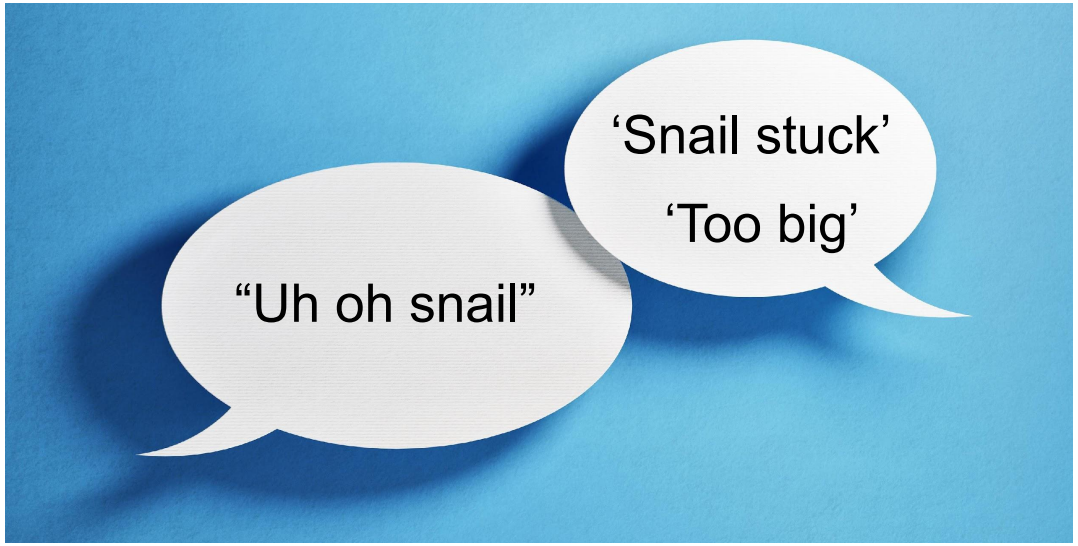
Interactive Reading:
Posing suggestions or Problems



“Oh no the snail can’t fit through the arch because his shell is too big and the arch is very narrow. I wonder what the snail is going to do next?”

‘Snail go that way’, ‘go backwards’, ‘climb up and down’, ‘help snail’

Over time the balance of who ‘reads’ or facilitates discussion about the book being read passes increasingly to the child

‘Uh oh snail is too big, he can’t fit. Snail go back and go round.’
Adult responds …

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Interactive Reading: Questioning

“Snail is looking at the blue flowers and the green leaves. I wonder which ones are his favourite?”

‘My favourite colour is pink’, ‘snail looking flowers’. ‘snails eat leaves’, ‘I like red buses’.

(After responding to children's comments you might add) “I like this pink flower with yellow in the middle”

You could also use the actual flower name in your commenting exposing the children to the correct terminology.

Interactive Reading: Recalling

“Look at snail’s slimy trail ,we can see where snail has been. Snail went ? …..
‘past flowers’, ‘in dark tunnel’, ‘down, very slippery’

Over time the balance of who ‘reads’ or facilitates discussion about the book being read passes increasingly to the child

Often a child will then choose to ‘read’ the whole book near you the adult, they might point at the snail on each page and say “snail” and remember some of the words or make up their own story.

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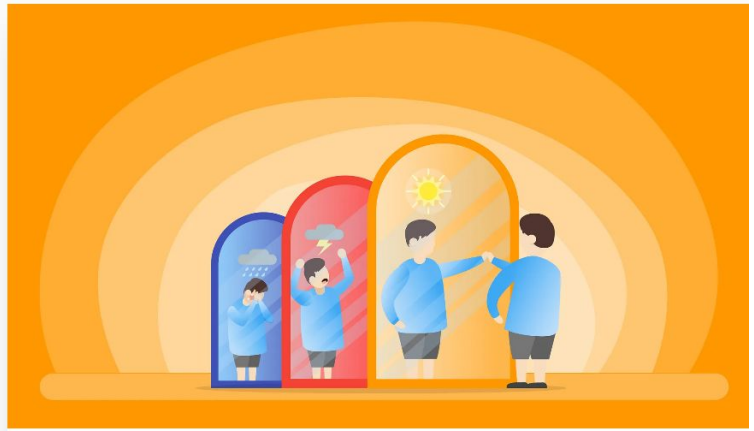
Snail trail doesn't overtly cover emotions apart from going to sleep at the end. Snail might have been feeling tired after his journey.

You could talk about how Snail might be feeling when he went out on the trail – excited, scared, worried, frustrated.

Perhaps he was lonely and was looking for another snail?



Personal Social and Emotional Development

Our personal emotions relating to finding, touching and holding snails both as adults and also children.

Being careful and respectful to snails – gently picking them up and putting them back where they were found so they are close to their family and friends.

Snails can show their emotions by hiding in their shells or being brave and exploring.

If the snail is picked up and frightened it makes bubbles showing us it wants to be put back where we found it.

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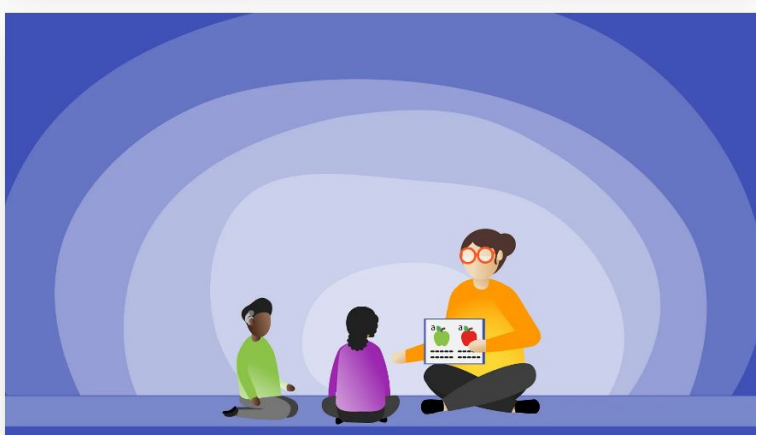


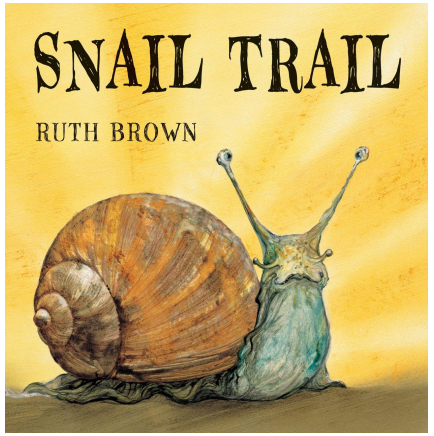
Early Literacy

Songs and Nursery Rhymes

Sound discrimination sssssssssss

Things starting with S – snail, sunny, slime, slippery, steep, slope, slow, shell, sleep … sausage, strawberry (**alliteration**)

Odd one out e.g. “snail, snake, elephant”



Rhyming words
snail, trail, whale, sail, mail, rail

Interactive reading / co reading is where the child remembers and joins in with the words

Mark making and letter formation
On large and small scale wiggly lines, trails, spirals, circles leading to letter and sounds s, e, o

Sorting Sounds
Give snail things starting with S e.g. socks, scissors, soap, sellotape
“No thank you says Snail, cake starts with c”

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Snail Songs and Nursery Rhymes

Snail
A spoken tickly rhyme on a child's hand

Slowly, slowly, ever so slowly
Creeps the garden snail.
Slowly, slowly, ever so slowly
Up the wooden rail.

Quickly, quickly, ever so quick
Runs the little mouse.
Quickly, quickly, very quickly
Round about the house.

https://youtu.be/dqU-vrZeKCs

Slippery Sue
(Wiggly Woo's friend & tune)

There's a snail at the
Bottom of my garden,
And her name is Slippery Sue.
There's a snail at the
Bottom of my garden
And all that she can do
Is slither all night
And slither all day
And when she goes
She's got somewhere to stay
There's a snail at the
Bottom of my garden,
And her name is Slippery Sue

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Early Mathematics

Snail Hunt & Count

Go outside on a wet day and count how many snails you find.

Can you recognise a group of 3 without counting 1, 2, 3? (Subitising)

Snail Races (Measurement and ordinal numbers)

Gather snails into 1 damp location and watch to see which one is the winner of the race. Use ordinal numbers to describe which snail came first, second and third etc.

You could also use a ruler or tape measure to measure how far the snail has travelled.

Snail Sizes

Compare the sizes of snails you find
big, small, medium, tiny
That one is biggest / smallest or the same size as this one.

Patterns-
making+ drawing patterns on the snail shells

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Mark and recapture garden snails

Wildlife Watch

You will need:

- an area of garden or pond
- tub or pot

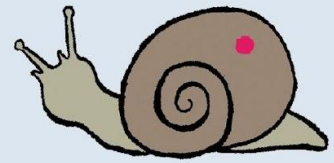
- waterproof paint (non-toxic)

- small paint brush

- pad and pen

1. In your chosen area, find as many snails as you can and collect them in a tub. Write down how many you find.

2. Place a tiny dot of paint on the shell of each snail. Don't let the paint touch their bodies, and don't use too much.



Small dot to avoid attracting predators

3. Release the snails back where you found them, and leave them for a few days. Return and do another search – count how many are with and without a paint spot.

You can work out how many snails might be living in your chosen area with this sum:

$$\text{No. of snails in the area} = \frac{\text{No. of snails in first visit} \times \text{No. in second visit}}{\text{No. of marked snails in second visit}}$$

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Self-Regulation and Executive Function

What are self-regulation and executive function?
Self-regulation involves a complex range of skills and abilities that enable children to monitor their emotions and thoughts and choose how to adapt their behaviour in different circumstances.

Snail found a dark cave to curl up in his shell when he was feeling tired and went to sleep.

When we touch a snail its tentacles and eyes retreat.

How and what do we do to show our emotions when we are tired, scared, excited?

Teaching Self-monitoring and Self-awareness
Educators help children to develop an awareness of their own thoughts and emotions. They teach children strategies to help them be aware of their physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings. Educators provide names and labels for children's feelings and behaviours and suggestions of how to manage them. Educators help children to make links between how their actions and feelings influence each other, and vice versa.

To help children better **label**, **understand**, and **manage their own emotions**

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Creating and Navigating Challenge

Creating challenge can improve children's executive function in the early years. Challenges should provide opportunities for children to test out different strategies themselves. To scaffold learning, educators should provide support when introducing new challenges and when children struggle.

Self-Regulation and Executive Function

Problem solving

When snail gets stuck in the fork because it is too narrow, what can he do?

Thinking aloud typically involves adults or children sharing their thought processes with others, for example while solving a problem. Thinking aloud has been found to support children's executive function, self-regulated learning and pre-literacy skills.

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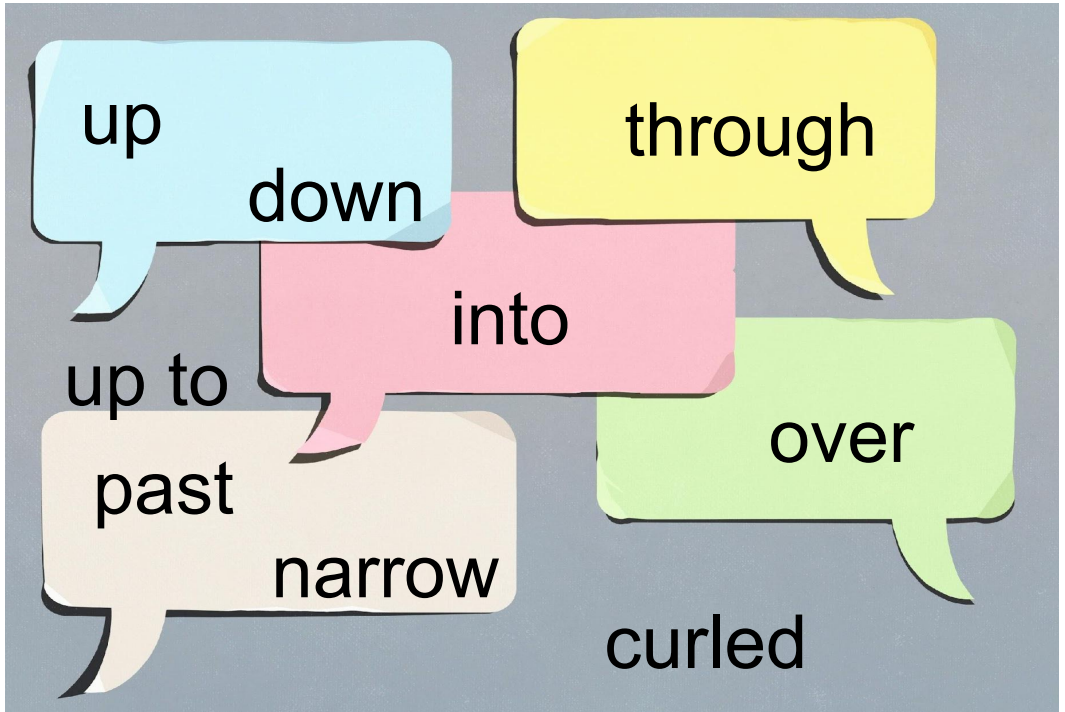
Physical Development
Promoting physical activity

The educator aims to improve physical development by encouraging children to be active.
Educators promoted physical activity in a variety of ways, for example, introducing a new game or resource or increasing the amount of time given to physical activity.
Educators focused on incorporating elements of play and prioritised children's enjoyment.
Educators often demonstrated how to participate and then allowed time for children to play, practise, and repeat an activity.

Obstacle course Describing route & actions, using words from the Communication & Language: Teaching and Modelling Language



Follow a trail

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Teaching the skills needed for movement and handling

The educator aims to improve physical development by explicitly teaching and consolidating movement or handling skills by using verbal or physical prompts. Verbal direction could involve giving feedback, cues, explanations, and suggestions; physical direction could involve modelling and demonstrating movements. Movement and handling skills can include gross and fine motor skills.

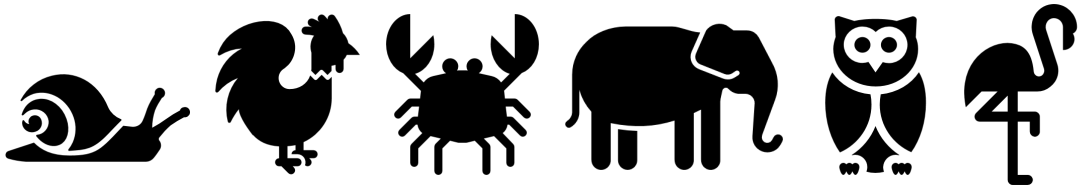
In one study, a session started with a story; the children then imitated the animals in the book to develop different ways of moving.

Move in different ways

e.g. crawling, sliding, slithering, curling, hiding

Move like different animals

snail – slithers & slides
Chicken – walks on 2 legs
Crab – moves sideways and open & shuts claws or supports weight on arms & legs and moves sideways.
Elephant – All fours & plods
Owl – flies and when still moves head
Flamingo – balances on 1 leg



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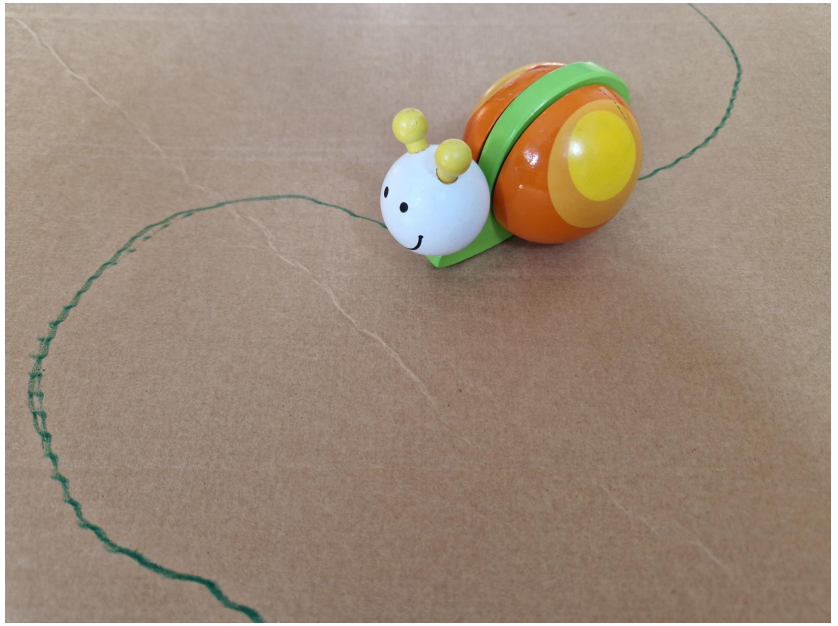
Teaching the skills needed for mark-making and letter formation

Gross motor skills are the building blocks for the fine motor skills needed for mark-making and later letter formation. Evidence shows that educators can plan activities to improve the fine motor and visual motor skills that are needed for mark-making and later letter formation.

Playdough Snails

Manipulating playdough by rolling to make a ‘sausage’, rolling a ball to add as a shell and rolling and then curling to make a spiral shell and a snail’s foot and head.

Make a trail for others (or snail toy) to follow using water with a paint brush or chalk for temporary or paint and pens on large paper.



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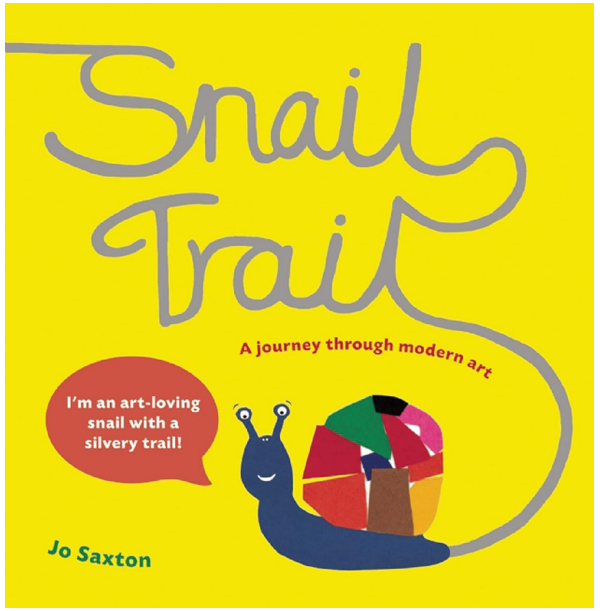
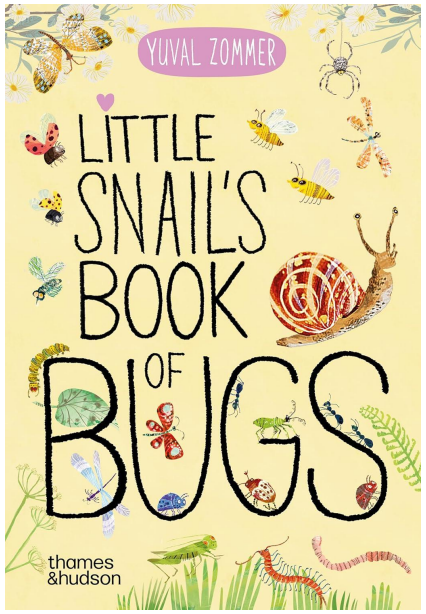
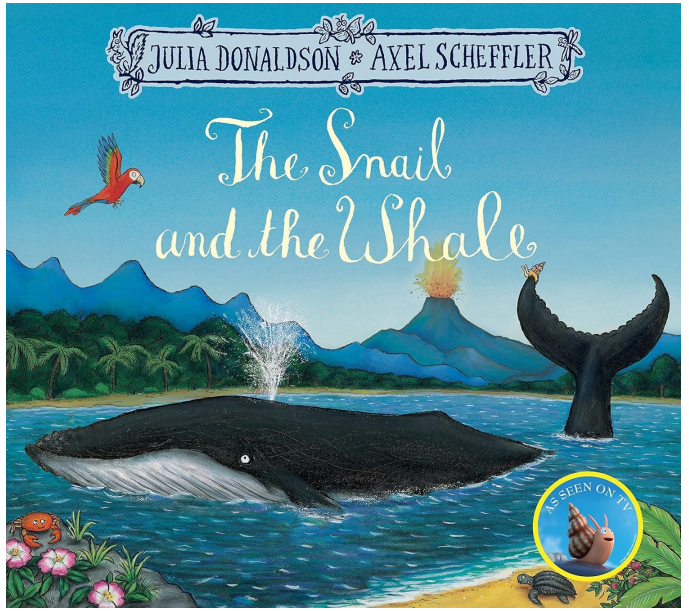
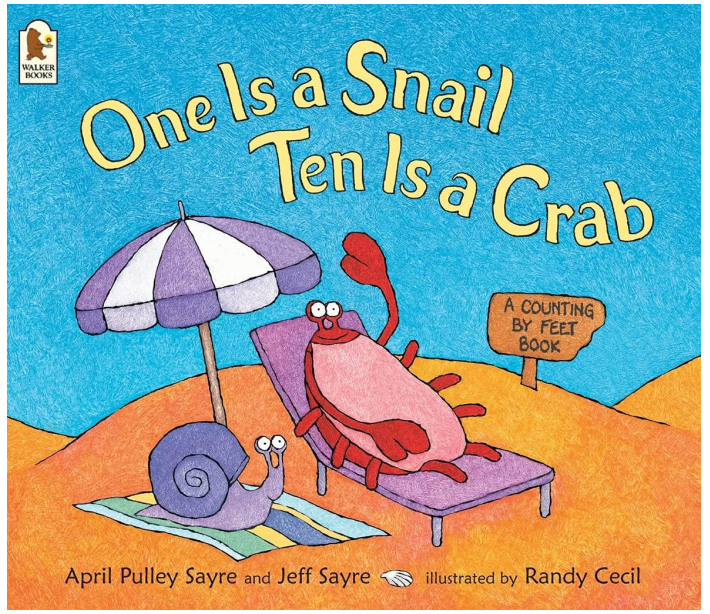
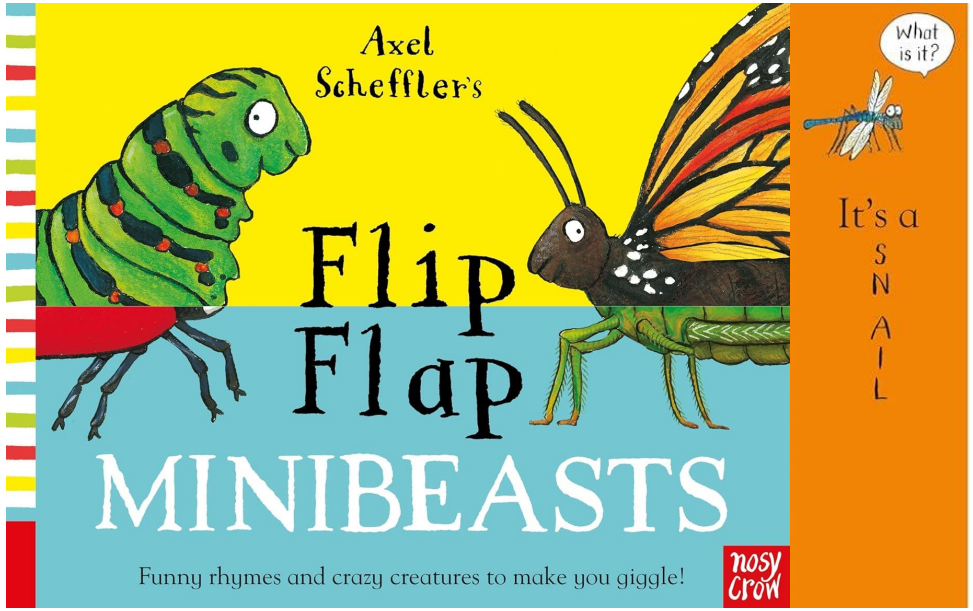




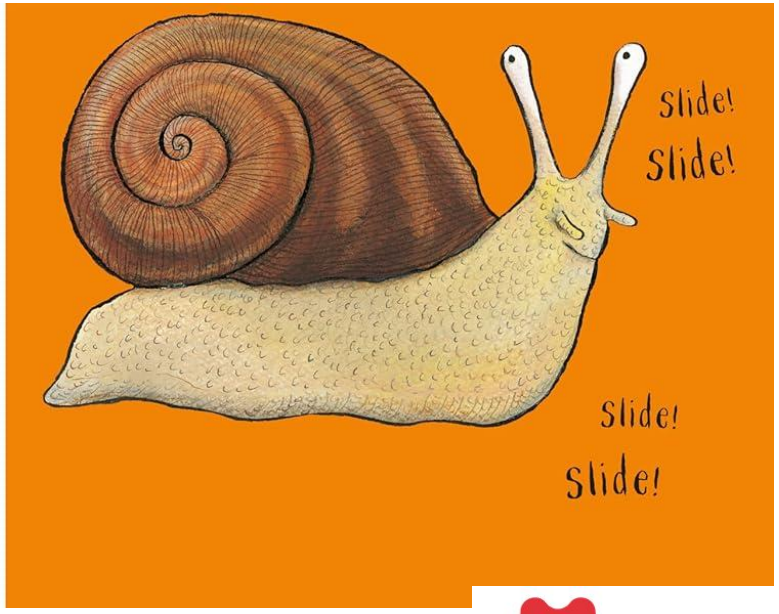






To keep me safe from harm,
I have a shell upon my back.
It's swirly and I hide inside
when predators attack.

I leave a slimy trail behind,
wherever I may go.
But don't get stuck behind me
as I'm super-duper slow!



Other Snail Book Recommendations

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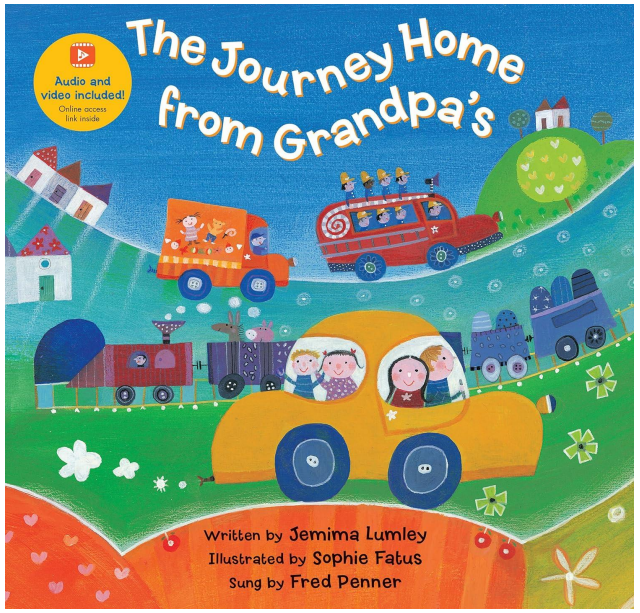
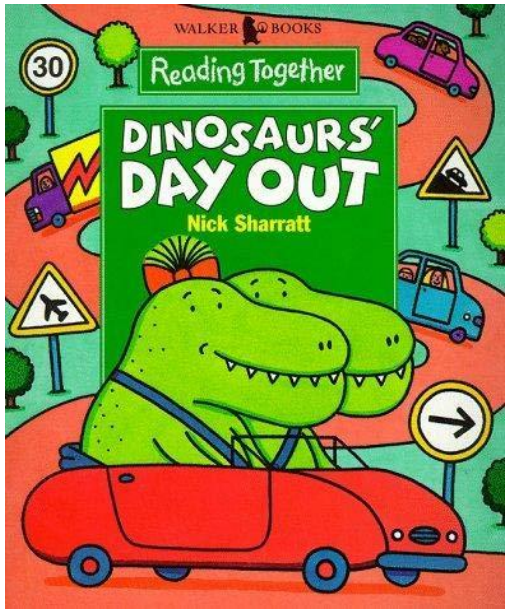
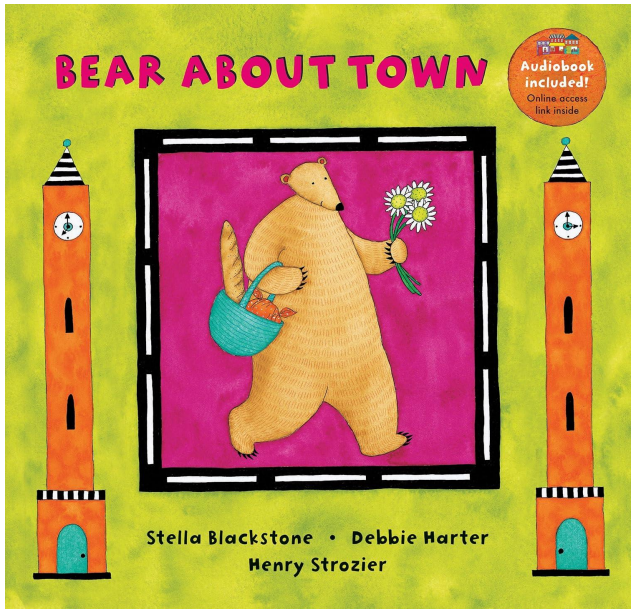
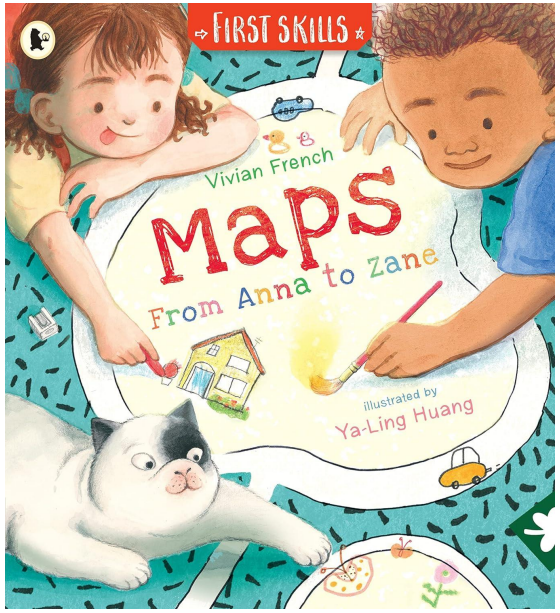
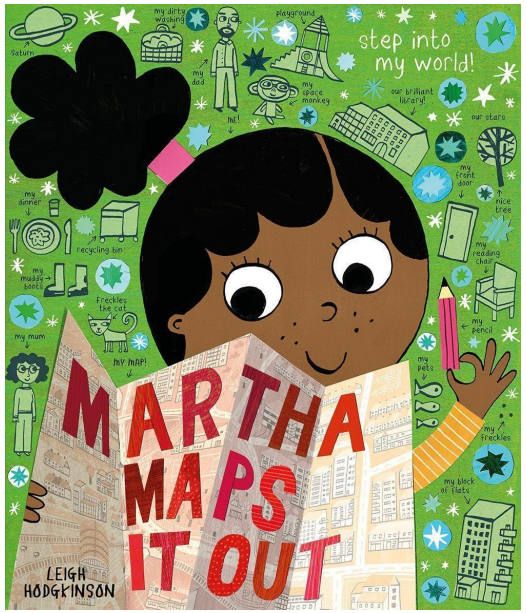


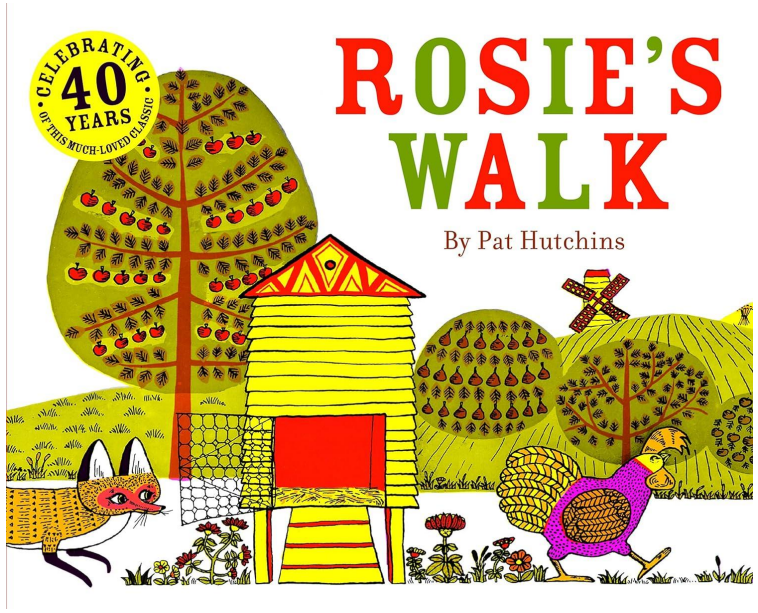


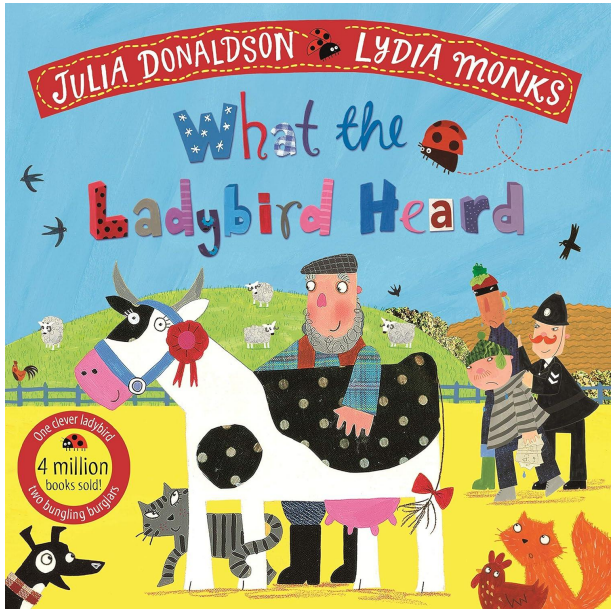




Books supporting routes & maps







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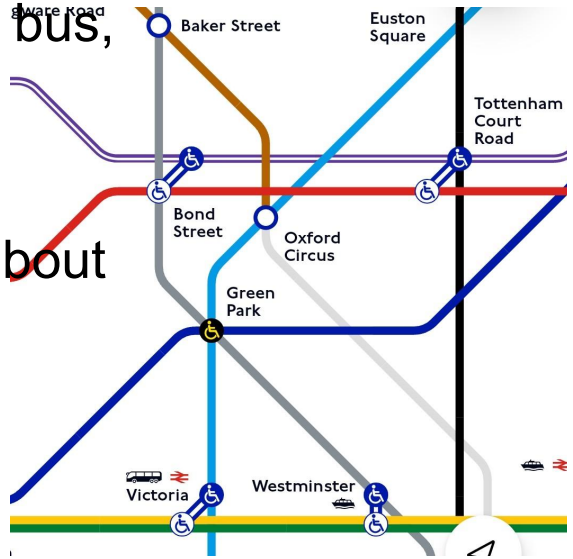
Further ideas

- Make your own maps of your local area.
- Draw our route to the park or library.
- Which way? Child(ren) guide the adult to the playground in the park. Words including left, right, forwards, backwards, straight on, go, stop.

- Plan a journey either by foot or on the bus, tube, train and then go on it.



- Where did we find the snails? Learn about habitats

Where in the world are we?

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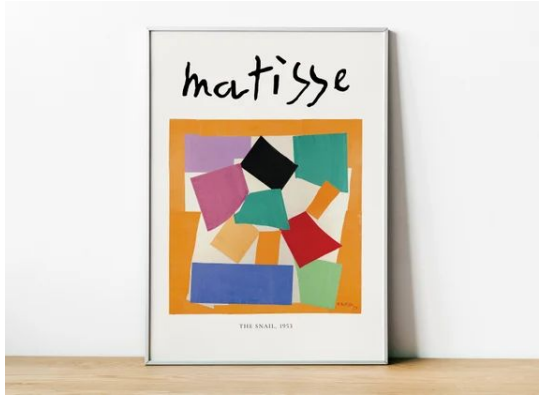
Further ideas

- pipe cleaner snail art
- tissue paper snail art
- snail shelters- making them
- snail locomotion- looking at how they move on a glass surface
- making snail tracks on black paper and sprinkle on talcum powder to see the tracks better
- slime making activities
- Matisse snails

Think of questions to get the children to think about 'how' they can 'make' things rather than getting them all to produce the 'same' version of the art. (individualised art/their interpretation)

- learning parts of the snail-labelling parts using sounds/letter correspondence
- different snails- similarities and differences- sorting activity
- life cycle of snails
- clay snails
- salt dough snails



Snail Activities for Kids | HowStuffWorks
The Snail Painting - Search Images (bing.com)
Snail Activities For Early Years - Primary (teacher made) (twinkl.com)
10 Adorable Snail Crafts for Preschoolers - Education Outside

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Reflection

What is the first thing you will take away from this evening and will try with the children?

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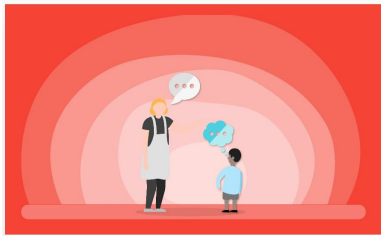
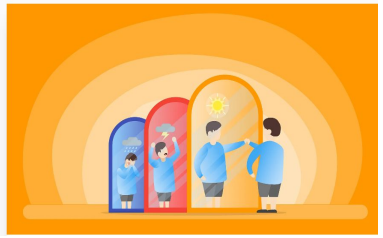
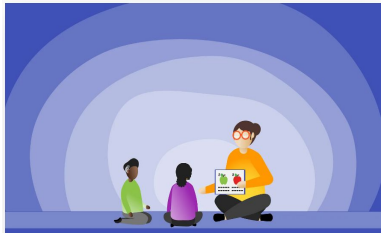
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store



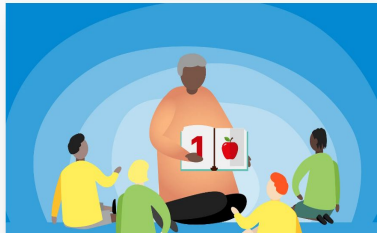
Communication and Language



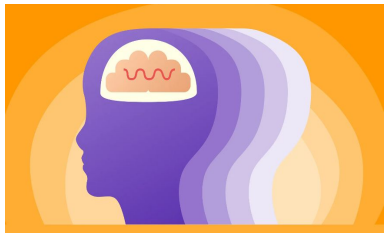
Personal Social and Emotional Development



Early Literacy



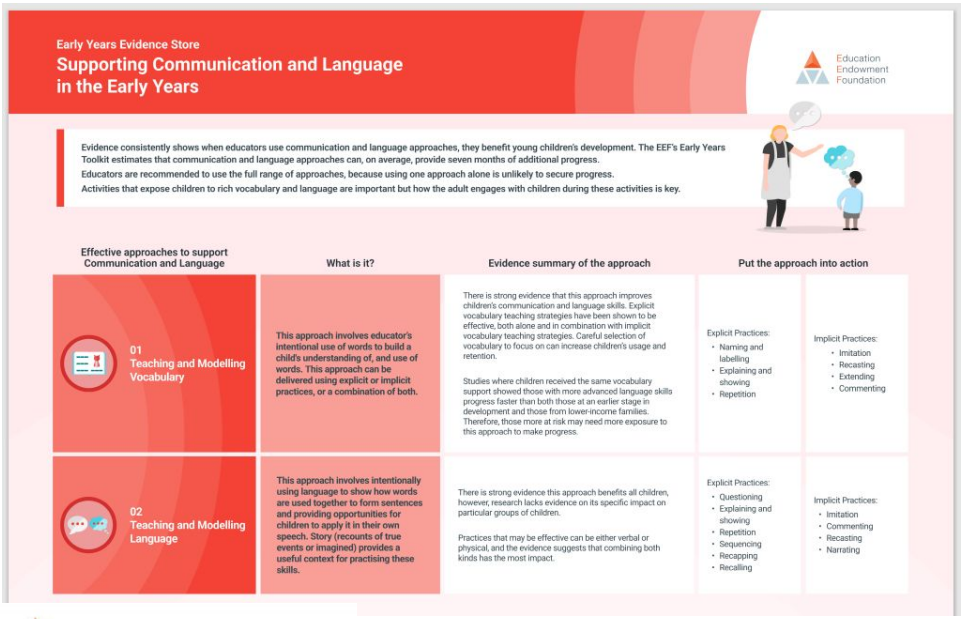
Early Mathematics



Self-Regulation and Executive Function

Physical Development

Downloadable summary of the evidence



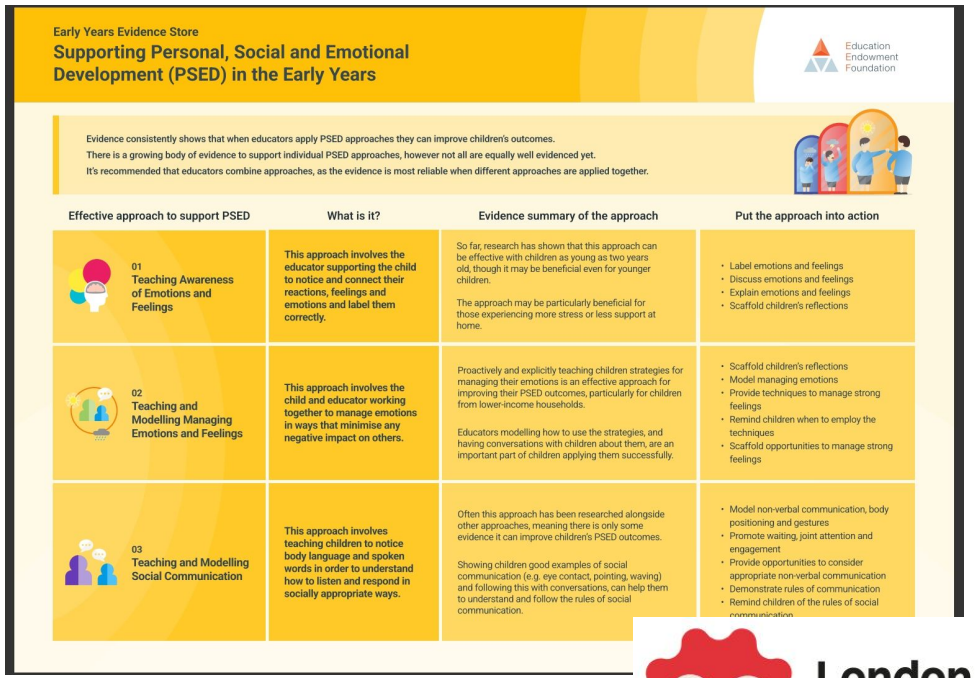
Early Years Evidence Store

Supporting Communication and Language in the Early Years

Education Endowment Foundation

Evidence consistently shows when educators use communication and language approaches, they benefit young children's development. The EEF's Early Years Toolkit estimates that communication and language approaches can, on average, provide seven months of additional progress.
Educators are recommended to use the full range of approaches, because using one approach alone is unlikely to secure progress.
Activities that expose children to rich vocabulary and language are important but how the adult engages with children during these activities is key.

Effective approaches to support Communication and Language	What is it?	Evidence summary of the approach	Put the approach into action	
01 Teaching and Modelling Vocabulary	This approach involves educator's intentional use of words to build a child's understanding of, and use of words. This approach can be delivered using explicit or implicit practices, or a combination of both.	There is strong evidence that this approach improves children's communication and language skills. Explicit vocabulary teaching strategies have been shown to be effective, both alone and in combination with implicit vocabulary teaching strategies. Careful selection of vocabulary to focus on can increase children's usage and retention. Studies where children received the same vocabulary support showed those with more advanced language skills progress faster than both those at an earlier stage in development and those from lower-income families. Therefore, those more at risk may need more exposure to this approach to make progress.	Explicit Practices: • Naming and labelling • Explaining and showing • Repetition	Implicit Practices: • Imitation • Recasting • Extending • Commenting
02 Teaching and Modelling Language	This approach involves intentionally using language to show how words are used together to form sentences and providing opportunities for children to apply it in their own speech. Story (recounts of true events or imagined) provides a useful context for practising these skills.	There is strong evidence this approach benefits all children, however, research lacks evidence on its specific impact on particular groups of children. Practices that may be effective can be either verbal or physical, and the evidence suggests that combining both kinds has the most impact.	Explicit Practices: • Questioning • Explaining and showing • Repetition • Sequencing • Recapping • Recalling	Implicit Practices: • Imitation • Commenting • Recasting • Narrating



Early Years Evidence Store

Supporting Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) in the Early Years

Education Endowment Foundation

Evidence consistently shows that when educators apply PSED approaches they can improve children's outcomes.
There is a growing body of evidence to support individual PSED approaches, however not all are equally well evidenced yet.
It's recommended that educators combine approaches, as the evidence is most reliable when different approaches are applied together.

Effective approach to support PSED	What is it?	Evidence summary of the approach	Put the approach into action
01 Teaching Awareness of Emotions and Feelings	This approach involves the educator supporting the child to notice and connect their reactions, feelings and emotions and label them correctly.	So far, research has shown that this approach can be effective with children as young as two years old, though it may be beneficial even for younger children. The approach may be particularly beneficial for those experiencing more stress or less support at home.	• Label emotions and feelings • Discuss emotions and feelings • Explain emotions and feelings • Scaffold children's reflections
02 Teaching and Modelling Managing Emotions and Feelings	This approach involves the child and educator working together to manage emotions in ways that minimise any negative impact on others.	Proactively and explicitly teaching children strategies for managing their emotions is an effective approach for improving their PSED outcomes, particularly for children from lower-income households. Educators modelling how to use the strategies, and having conversations with children about them, are an important part of children applying them successfully.	• Scaffold children's reflections • Model managing emotions • Provide techniques to manage strong feelings • Remind children when to employ the techniques • Scaffold opportunities to manage strong feelings
03 Teaching and Modelling Social Communication	This approach involves teaching children to notice body language and spoken words in order to understand how to listen and respond in socially appropriate ways.	Often this approach has been researched alongside other approaches, meaning there is only some evidence it can improve children's PSED outcomes. Showing children good examples of social communication (e.g. eye contact, pointing, waving) and following this with conversations, can help them to understand and follow the rules of social communication.	• Model non-verbal communication, body positioning and gestures • Promote waiting, joint attention and engagement • Provide opportunities to consider appropriate non-verbal communication • Demonstrate rules of communication • Remind children of the rules of social communication

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Supporting Physical Development in the Early Years

Education Endowment Foundation

Effective approaches to support Physical Development	What is it?	Evidence summary of the approach	Put the approach into action	
02 Teaching the skills needed for movement and handling	**The educator aims to support physical development by focusing on the skills children need for movement and handling. This could include verbal and/or physical prompts, modelling and other strategies to help children acquire and consolidate skills.**	Teaching movement skills positively impacts children's physical development. Educators can use playful or motivating contexts and combine some structured teaching time with opportunities for children to play and practise freely. Focusing on a specific skill can improve competency in that skill. Teaching may be more effective when educators thoughtfully vary difficulty levels and give verbal and physical direction. Verbal direction includes giving feedback and making suggestions. Physical direction includes the educator demonstrating movements.	• Explaining • Narrating • Repetition • Reminding • Commenting • Reflecting • Showing • Breaking down and sequencing • Physically supporting	• Signposting • Targeting • Extending • Suggesting • Using mistakes as teaching and learning opportunities • Adapting
03 Teaching the skills needed for mark-making and letter formation	**The educator uses strategies to encourage children's mark-making and their developing motor skills.**	Gross motor skills are the building blocks for the more focused coordination needed for mark-making. Engaging in mark-making can improve children's fine motor skills, visual motor skills and manual dexterity. This can be supported by a wider range of activities like playing with construction toys, using tools like scissors, threading, and fastening buttons and zips. Providing older children with feedback, encouragement, and goal setting can also support their mark-making outcomes.	• Preparing • Modelling • Narrating • Demonstrating • Using memory prompts • Commenting • Repetition	

Explore the Early Years Evidence Store to find out more about Physical Development and other themes, including PSED and Early Mathematics.

Scan the QR code for detailed examples and videos of the approaches in action.

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Questions

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Get Involved!

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