



EYFS Activity Session Plans

Black Tide: A Story of the Sea, Ships and Helping Nature

Age Group: 3-5 years (EYFS)

Theme: Understanding our relationship with the sea through exploration, storytelling, creativity and play.

Curriculum Links:

- Understanding the World: The Natural World
- Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

Activity 1: Exploring the Seashore

Learning Objective

Children explore natural materials found at the seaside and begin to understand that beaches are homes for wildlife.

Starter Story

Show photographs of Cornwall's beaches and introduce a simple story:

"Many years ago, a very big ship called the Torrey Canyon got lost near Cornwall and had an accident, it got stuck on the rocks. The sea and beaches changed, and people worked together to help animals and nature."

Activity: Seaside Discovery Tuff Tray

Resources:

- Sand
- Water
- Pebbles
- Shells
- Seaweed
- Toy sea creatures

Children investigate:

Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

- What feels rough or smooth?
- Tell me about what lives in the sea?
- What can you see under the water?

Activity: Seaside Discovery Water Tray

Resources:

- Wood
- Pebbles
- Plastic
- Marbles
- Boats

Children investigate:

Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

- What floats?
- Tell me about what sinks?
- What can you see under the water?

EYFS Links

The Natural World

- Explore natural materials.
- Observe similarities and differences.

Communication & Language

- Describe textures and observations.

Activity 2: How Do We Travel?

Learning Objective

Children understand that people and goods travel by different forms of transport.

Activity: Transport Sorting

Resources:

- Toy cars
- Boats
- Trains
- Aeroplanes
- Transport books to look at

Questions: Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

- Tell me about these vehicles
- Describe why you think they travel on water?
- Which travel on roads?
- How do things get from one place to another?

Small World Play extension

Create a harbour and road system using:

- Blocks
- Toy boats
- Toy vehicles
- Transport books to look at, include *The Harbour* by Peter Dupasquier if available

Children move goods between places.

Questions: Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

How do the people in the town get the goods or food from the boats?

EYFS Links

People, Culture and Communities

- Learn about transport and journeys.
 - Discuss how communities are connected.
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Activity 3: Caring for Wildlife

Learning Objective

Children understand that animals need clean habitats.

Story Circle

Read a story about seabirds or marine animals. Eg Tiddler Julia Donaldson

Discuss:

- Where animals live.
- What animals need to stay healthy.
- How people can help wildlife.

Activity: Wildlife Rescue Play

Resources:

- Toy birds
- Toy seals
- Doctor/vet kits

Children role-play helping animals after a storm.

Questions: Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

EYFS Links

PSED

- Caring for living things.
- Developing empathy.

The Natural World

- Understanding habitats.
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Activity 4: Building a Big Ship

Learning Objective

Children investigate construction and design.

Activity: Junk Modelling Ship

Resources:

- Cardboard boxes
- Tubes
- Recycled materials
- Tape

Children work together to build a large ship.

Discuss:

Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

- What makes a boat float/sink?
- What might happen when a boat gets stuck?

EYFS Links

Expressive Arts & Design

- Construct with purpose.
 - Work collaboratively.
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Activity 5: Plasticine Animation - The Story of the Torrey Canyon

Learning Objective

Children use storytelling and animation to retell a real historical event.

Introduction

Use simple language:

"A very big ship came near Cornwall. It got stuck on rocks. The sea became dirty and lots of people worked together to help clean the beaches and protect the animals."

Avoid discussing oil or pollution in detail.

Focus on:

- A ship
- The sea
- Animals
- Helpers
- Working together

Activity: Plasticine Story Building

Children create a film using story narrative:

1. The ship sailing
2. The ship meeting rocks
3. Animals on the beach
4. Helpers arriving
5. Beaches are becoming clean again

Resources

- Black Plasticine for oil
- To make animals
- Pebbles and rocks
- Boats
- Playmobile or other model people.

Plasticine Animation

Using tablets and simple stop-motion software: Animate It, Flipaclip or Stop Motion Studio

Children create a plasticine sea animal

Children create a scene with a boat and rocks

Children move characters a little at a time and take photographs.

Adult records children's narration: eg

- "The ship is sailing."
- "Oh no! It got stuck."
- "People are helping."
- "The animals are being helped."
- "Nature has healed"

EYFS Links

Expressive Arts & Design

- Create narratives.
- Use media and technology.

Communication & Language

- Retell stories.
- Develop vocabulary.

Activity 6: Our Sea Promise

Learning Objective

Children reflect on how they can care for nature.

Group Discussion

Available adult asks why, how, what, describe, tell me about..., or what do you think about...

Questions:

- What do you love about the beach?
- How can we help wildlife?
- What should we do with litter?

Collaborative Artwork

Create a large mural

"We Love Our Sea"

Children create:

- Handprints
- Fish
- Birds
- Boats
- Beaches

Children give their promise to the ocean as they add their motif to the mural. I promise...

eg I promise to pick up litter.

I promise to look after sea creatures etc

EYFS Links

PSED

- Responsibility and community.

Expressive Arts & Design

- Collaborative art-making.
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Expected Outcomes

Children will:

- Recognise that beaches and seas are important places.
- Understand that ships travel across the sea.
- Show care and empathy towards wildlife.
- Explore materials through sensory play.
- Retell a simplified version of the Torrey Canyon story.
- Create a short Lego animation inspired by a real Cornish historical event.
- Develop early understanding of environmental stewardship through positive actions and community helping.

Resources

- [Images link](#)
- [Learning more about animation](#)

About

Black Tide: The SS Torrey Canyon Oil Spill is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to produce archive, oral history, first-person accounts, film and outreach events.

Mor Media, is a Charity that brings people together through our community programmes and runs media training & education in Cornwall. Enhances career prospects and deepens understanding with our Industry talks & masterclasses, and innovates with a year-round film programme.

www.mormediacharity.org