

Curriculum area: Social and Emotional	Stage: 6
Learning Goal: Uses items to represent things in play.	
<p>General Guidance:</p> <p>Remember play should always be fun for the pupil.</p> <p>At stage 6 the pupil may be starting to play imaginatively and use items to represent things. Join in and encourage the pupil to use items to represent things but remember it is their imagination that is important to encourage and develop and you are only there to assist them, not tell them.</p> <p>Imaginative play cannot be 'taught' but it can be encouraged and developed. Some children find pretend play very difficult. We cannot force them to pretend or tell them to do so. The best way to encourage a pupil to develop imaginative play is to model it regularly. Initially the pupil may ignore you and not wish to join in or pay any attention to it, but keep modelling and eventually they may start to imitate you. Give out the message that there is no 'right' way and no 'wrong' way to play imaginatively but just 'their' way and encourage any signs they make at using items to represent things in play.</p> <p>Watch for signs that a pupil is developing imaginative play e.g., they take a cup to a dolls mouth, and encourage, copy and model imaginary play back to them using small items to represent things in the real world.</p> <p>Model lots of play with the pupil in the role play corner and watch their actions and model them back and then, with-out taking their ideas over completely, try to expand on them.</p> <p>At this early stage in imaginative play, the pupil will probably be using mini versions of real objects or items that have some physical resemblance to the ones they represent.</p> <p>Ensure that all pupils have the vocabulary they need for their play and any communication aids are accessible e.g., communication symbols, switches, communication aids such as iPad, eye gaze, objects of reference etc.</p> <p>Make a collection of items that can be used as props: cleaning brushes, washing baskets, plastic flowers, old telephones, stuffed animals and dolls, blankets, plastic crockery and cutlery.</p>	
Ways to include these activities in the classroom/curriculum:	
<p>Using items to represent things is a skill that links across the curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English-reading and storytelling. Finding items to represent elements of the story. • Drama-creating props. • DT-creating props for story telling 	

Activity	Resources
<p>Small versions in role play corner</p> <p>Imaginative play starts with the pupil using smaller versions of the actual items themselves. e.g., playing with small tea sets that look like the real thing.</p> <p>The play items need to closely resemble the item it represents.</p> <p>Create imaginary play corners/areas inside or outside with props that correspond to things that are familiar to the pupil e.g., cups and kettles, cleaning equipment, gardening tools Include soft toys action men or some dolls for the pupil to use the items on as appropriate.</p> <p>Play with the pupil to model actions that can be done with the items and use simple language to describe actions.</p>	<p>commercially available mini world items for role play corners</p> <p>make available lots of realistic props: small tea sets, phones, saucepans, gardening tools, baskets, boxes, toy animals, brushes, brooms,</p> <p>alter the role play area regularly to different familiar areas</p>
<p>Mini worlds</p> <p>Create mini-worlds in shallow trays or boxes or on play mats.</p> <p>Let the pupil build up small worlds using 'play mobile', "Lego" or other commercially available mini world items.</p> <p>Create:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homes for people and/or animals • hospitals • schools • woodlands/gardens for animals • towns for cars • rocks for dinosaurs • sand and water for sea creatures <p>Model imaginary play using the characters and use simple vocabulary that can be copied.</p>	<p>trays, boxes or mini world mats.</p> <p>play mobile, Lego, mini world kits</p> <p>cars</p> <p>play people/characters</p> <p>small animals</p>

<p>One object resembles another</p> <p>The next stage from using actual small versions to represent items is using items that have some physical resemblance to the item they represent. The adult can model this to the pupil using first a model item and then finding something that can represent it. Early symbolic play often revolves around:</p> <p>Cafe or picnic play indoors or outside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend to drink from any cup shaped item. • Pretend things are plates and bowls e.g., a leaf is a plate. • Make up pretend foods for the cafe (this has health and safety considerations. Please be wary if the pupil is liable to really eat the pretend food) <p>Give demonstrations and use lots of licking of lips and 'mmm yummy yummy' sounds to make this game more exciting.</p> <p>Pretend hair brushing</p> <p>Let the pupil use a real brush or comb to do their own or someone else hair. Then substitute a pretend cardboard brush /comb for the pupil to use in play, or show how they can pretend using a hand to brush their hair.</p> <p>Homes</p> <p>Containers are houses for toys etc.</p> <p>Model lots of ways to use imaginative play items in the role play corner. Follow the pupils lead and expand and develop their ideas.</p>	<p>range of natural items from outside</p> <p>reclaimed material items,</p> <p>shaped card</p> <p>containers</p>
<p>One object represents another with-out resembling it.</p> <p>This requires a lot more imagination and although it can be encouraged, really the pupil has to make it up for themselves.</p>	

<p>Story telling</p> <p>Tell a familiar simple story or rhyme with the pupil.</p> <p>As the story is told use objects to represent characters, objects or actions of the story. Can the pupil help find items to represent elements of the story?</p>	<p>familiar stories various items that relate to the story-use items with all kind of sensory qualities</p>
<p>Playdough / modelling:</p> <p>With a group of pupils, give them each a ball of playdough and tell a story. As adult tells the story, ask the pupils to make characters and items from the plot, so one pupil might make Cinderella, another shoe, another the prince.</p> <p>Alternatively, use a set of plastic picnic items and use playdough to make the food to go on the plates, pretend to feed the food to teddies or dolls.</p>	<p>Playdough or modelling clay Group of pupils.</p> <p>Picnic set playdough</p>
<p>Found items</p> <p>Tell a familiar story, such as the nursery rhyme, Jack and Jill. Go around the room and outside and make a collection of found items from the playground and field together. Try to find items that can represent aspects of the story, so you might look for a bucket in the sand tray, a bucket of soil for the hill, figures for Jack and Jill, a plaster for his head etc.</p>	<p>Basket Time outside Adult Partner Familiar story to retell.</p>
<p>How do I assess progress towards this learning goal?</p>	
<p>Can the pupil consistently:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy an adult or peer to use mini versions of the real items in role play? 2. Use mini versions of real items in role play? 3. Use an item that resembles another thing with an adult direction? 4. Use an item that resembles another thing? 5. Use items to represent things in play? 	
<p>For links to helpful resources see http://send-inspire.co.uk/resources</p>	