

Teaching and Learning

Expressive arts and design



Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) Is broken down into two aspects:

- Exploring and Using Media and Materials
- Being Imaginative

Exploring and Using Media and Materials

This is about how children experiment with media and materials finding out about their properties and modifying and manipulating them. It includes exploring sounds, patterns, movement and different tools and techniques.

Being Imaginative

This is about how children's explorations into the world of pretence, building on their experiences of the real world and transforming them into something new – whether through role play, music, pretend play, block play or small world play or a range of other areas.

Helping children to be creative is as much about encouraging attitudes of curiosity and questioning as about skills or techniques. Building on children's interests can lead to them creating amazing inventions or making marks on paper that represent for them an experience or something they have seen. Encouraging children to choose and use materials and resources in an open – ended way helps them to make choices and to have confidence in their own ideas.

“Children’s deep curiosity leads them to use all their senses to explore in real hands-on activities, and then put the information together in their own minds to form ideas and make sense of the world.”

(The National Strategies, Early Years 2009)

Remember! Retaining childhood confidence in their ideas and skills can be lost if practitioners ‘take over’ and try to suggest what they are making, thinking, or doing. By just expressing an interest in the process a child has gone through is often enough or asking questions such as ‘can you tell me about it – that looks interesting’ may be all that is needed to help a child hold on to their creativity.

Task

Let's reflect on how you promote EAD within your setting. With a partner reflect on the question below:

What opportunities are there within your environment for children to create...

- Their own music
- A dance
- A story of their making
- A model
- A painting
- A performance

How does this compare inside and outside?

What resources have you provided?

How can children access these resources?

How are the children's creations celebrated?

How do you respond to children's ideas and thinking?

What space is there for children to create?

How do adults engage in the creative process with the child?