

# Adventures with Alice

Dynamic Training for Early Years



Open the five doors  
into the brain

## Multi Sensory Play



# The senses in all of their glory

Do you hear  
that noise?  
Taste this!  
Look at me!  
Feel this, isn't  
it soft?

When you hear, or even use these phrases, you probably don't stop to think about why we use them. Well, it's because of our senses.

Without us even knowing, our sense organs (nose, eyes, ears, tongue, and skin) are taking in information and sending it to the brain for processing. If we didn't have them, we would not be able to smell, see, hear, taste, or touch anything! That would be a boring life!

Think of a scene from your life, something that makes you happy. Really think about it.

Consider the sounds, sights and smells you are surrounded by. What are you doing? Who are you with?

Something as simple as standing in a field on a warm day, or beside the sea on a windy day stimulates your senses. You can feel the warmth of the sun or the wind on your cheeks, you can smell the sea breeze and taste the salt on your lips.

You may have to scrunch up your eyes because of the bright shimmer on the water or the yellow haze of the flowers in the field.

The sound of the rustling leaves, the waves on the stones or the people nearby chatting.

It is suggested that sensory stimulation encourages endorphins - happy, "feel good" chemicals in the brain. These chemicals can become addictive, causing the individual to repeat the activity in order to renew the good feeling.



Sometimes in our busy playrooms we forget to consider the way our children's senses are being stimulated.

Remember the senses are the doors to opening our brains so thinking and engagement can happen.

Take time now to think about your spaces.

We have created these booklets for us to have time away from the crisis and help us focus on positive thoughts.

Nothing more positive than our wee folk!!

I hope they are helpful.

If we spend time thinking and writing things down we will have a stronger memory and have data and evidence!!

# Our learning stories

## Think about...

An experience you share. How many senses were engaged? Was it overstimulating for the children?

Did you notice any child avoiding using any of their senses? Why might that be?

# Sensorial Sensations

Choose an experience you have shared and capture the sensory journey through photos and words.

Benefits

Words

**Example**







### Alien Spaceship

Mo had been out with his friends in the snow. They gathered all the little men from around the garden. He immediately caught on to the language being used. Under the tree, beside the bush, next to the flowers etc.



He was determined to find a spaceship to place all his 'aliens' into it. He explained exactly what he was trying to do. He twisted and turned, bent and squashed them. Then he had a light bulb moment. He remembered that the tube could stretch.

“lets count them”

“put them in a line”

“we have lots of bendy men. We found them, went on a hunt, in the snow.”

“lets make them stand up straight like soldiers”.

“Put them in a big line or a pile. Show their faces”

“bend them all”

On reflecting on this I realise the range of skills being developed by the children. They were really considering the material of the aliens and how they could manipulate them. They were problem solving, working out alternatives, they were collaborating and extending each others ideas. Not to mention all the fine manipulative skills being developed!!





"this is the car or bus for them".

They need to go in, to go away, hide in it".

"I'll put them in. One at a time". You give them in".

"I like them, they look happy, smiling faces"



"If we put it up they will fit in. Just drop down."

Both B and H were happy to play alongside each other making suggestions. They were patient when taking turns and considering the other's contributions. They spoke their feelings and made comment on the emotions of the aliens.



If we do it carefully  
we can fit them in”.

“I’ll start again. First  
this one. I think they  
will fit. It will be not  
comfy. It will be hot  
and pushed up”.

“There are  
too many,  
they won’t  
all fit it”.



“I’ll help you.  
They are wee  
aliens.  
This is the  
spaceship”.

“It goes to the moon and the sky”.



“I can see them.  
Let go and squash  
them in”

## Note Down...

You could create a sensory journey for each of your key children.

Think of the resources they like to play with or their favourite place in the playroom. How can you make it more sensorial for them?



## Caution

Remember when using sensory stimulation to consider allergies and safety.

**Example**



# My Sensory Journey







Priya loves making marks

When back in nursery I plan to offer a wider range of mark makers for her to try. This will help with her fine motor control. I will perhaps consider putting out some items to be inspired by to develop her concentration and focus of attention.

By offering her a bigger range of pens and pencils in the make up brush holder she will have to select and make choices. She will have to manipulate the pens in and out of tricky spaces.



## Mark Makers



When we use these wooden tools I will talk about the patterns on them. I will invite her to tell me about each one as she selects them. I will challenge her to try and explain the marks she expects to make. I wonder if she will expect them to make different marks.

I will observe her using different tools and listen to the words she uses. I will introduce words such as dab, flick, splash, scrape, sweep, jab, swipe. I will encourage her to use them in different movements.



The world is packed with sensory information; bright lights, traffic noise, chatting people, the scents and aromas of foods, the feel of the sun or tickle of the rain.

We now know that even before birth children learn about the world by tasting, touching, smelling, listening, looking and moving around.

In fact, children best develop their senses by actively participating in the world. Babies wiggle their fingers. Toddlers repeat sing-song words.

Through each of these activities, children learn to process sensory input and they discover how their bodies move through space.

Young children become absorbed in using and understanding their senses. They are inquisitive and open to any appropriate challenges to explore and learn.

They say every picture tells a story. A simple piece of lycra fabric and things to bounce offers such excitement and happiness.

## Consider and list...

One or two of your learning zones. What materials and resources can children choose? Are they for all of the senses, or focused on one?

## Example

### Identify...

A few new alternative interesting items that could be added to your spaces.

### Consider

Possible language that could be used when interacting with these new items.





# Small World Play

reflecting on our small world; its not exciting, interesting or multi sensory.

We need to add a range of inexpensive items to create more materials that can be described and used in different ways.

By using these knitted characters hidden among real thistle, plants and herbs it's easy to see how the conversations would be richer.

I think we will start to look at popular media with positive messages and use them to bring our conversations and play to life.

Natural materials present opportunities for **sorting, classifying** and encourage the use of **descriptive language** – all important **mathematical and language skills** for young children.

moss

stones

rice

bark

twigs

Who knows what natural materials there may be on another planet!

## Make a note...

Note down beside your photos why you consider the items to be successful for stimulating Curiosity Investigation Discovery.

# Our Favourite Multi-Sensory Learning Zone





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