

The Stone Story Store EYFS – Geographical Association Conference Sheffield April 2018 – Nell Seal and Paula Owens

Areas of learning and development	Ages 3 – 5 <i>NB. Some practitioners found that using sets of stones with the less abstract pictures or even sets of stones with a clear theme (e.g. seaside) worked more effectively with some groups/younger children/the less able/initially.</i>
Understanding of the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss bird's eye views maybe using small world equipment to create a 'place' in a play tray and looking down on it from above. • Create a chalk grid on the playground and add some features like roads and rivers to begin to create a place. Use story stones to add other features to their 'map'. Individual children could be given their own stone to locate on the map wherever they wish.
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some ideas from 'communication and language' below link to i) begin to be aware of how stories are structured ii) suggest how stories might end and iii) describe main story settings • For older/more able you could display the story stones with symbols and the associated story stones with the matching word. Children match symbol to word.
Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group the story stones according to colour and count how many of each colour there are. • Use directional and positional language to describe locations of features on the 'map'. Describe the shape of symbols. • Use a simple metre ruler or stick to measure distance between features on the 'map'.
Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put stones in a cloth drawstring bag and shake it, pass it around: 'what do you think might be inside/is it hard or soft?' • Open up bag and display stones and allow children to examine them all. Ask children to pick their favourite stone and talk about it. • Create a group story with each child adding what happened next based on the stone they selected (could use the 'map' as a story setting). • Could retell the whole story again once it has been told once, remembering what each person said using the stones as prompts. • Practitioners can tell a story for their group by asking children to select the next stone and/or using questioning to develop the story, e.g. 'how will this pirate escape?' • Display story stones with symbols and ask children to make suggestions for what a symbol might mean. • Explore the story stone symbols together and explain what each symbol means when seen on an OS map. • Give children an opportunity to tell the group why they have chosen to put their story stone symbol in a certain place on the playground 'map'.
Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave the story stones in a basket out for free play and observe how children interact with the stones. • Photograph any patterns they make with them. • Allow children to create their own stones (with supervision because of type of paint being used) or tell you what pictures they would like to have on their set of stones.
Personal, social and emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple emoji story stones to reflect and express how they feel at the end of a session. • Use the story stones as talking objects in your group time (i.e. when a child is holding the object they are able to speak).
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a child a story stone with a symbol on it and ask them to stand on the place on the 'map' where they can see that matching symbol. • Use the stones for a pairing up game: give each child either a card with a symbol on it or a story stone with a symbol on it. Children run around approaching others one by one until they meet their match. • Display all of the symbols. Ask children to dream about their perfect village or town (including opportunities for keeping healthy). Which symbols would they include?