NEW VIC

Teachers' Treasures

Resources from the Story Treasures schools' programme

Cross Curricular Resources:

Each term we'll be providing some extra cross-curricular resources to hopefully help your students engage with some new topics on the curriculum!

This terms theme: Growth!

We believe that drama and creative activities can enhance cross-curricular learning by fostering critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, which support and enrich understanding in other areas of the curriculum

Key Stage 1 Curriculum Areas

Science

Plants and Growth:
Children learn what plants need to grow (light, water, air, soil) and observe the changes in plants over time.

Animals, Including Humans:
Children begin to understand how humans and animals grow and change as they develop.

Seasonal Changes:
Exploring how the seasons influence plant and animal growth in the environment.

Learning Outcomes

- To develop awareness and understanding of how living things grow and the conditions they need.
- To educate students about the different stages of growth in plants, animals, and humans.
- To introduce the topic in practical and interactive ways

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To ensure lots of different learners can engage this plan contains:

Visual Aids * Auditory Elements
Kinesthetic Activities * Logical Reasoning
Interpersonal Interaction
Intrapersonal Reflection* Naturalistic Elements
Active Listening

Crafted with a sprinkle of imagination by

NEW VIC education

You will need:

- Some images of the lifecycle of a frog; how the frogspawn changes to a tadpole and then becomes a frog.
- Toys of the some of the animals we might meet in the book; a frog, lamb, rabbit, grasshopper, fish etc.
- Book: The Teeny Weeny Tadpole, by Sheridan Cain & Jack Tickle
- A speaker and resources to play 'Spring' from Vivaldi's 'The Four Seasons' (3 minutes 12 seconds)

Warm Up

Warm-up activities are great for getting the group energized, focused, and ready to learn! This warm up in particular gets the children into the topic and builds the skills they need for the later activities.

The Aim:
Physical Warm-up
Vocal warm-up
Introducing the topic
Enhance imagination
Practise following instructions

Flowers

Children pretend to be tiny seeds in the ground. They can spread out or line up in rows. The teacher asks them what the might need to grow. The teacher can first suggest that they need soil so tell them to wiggle deep down into the ground. For water, the teacher can walk up and down the rows pretending to water them with a watering can. For sun, the teacher can pretend to send rays of sunshine down to them. Then the teacher talks them through gradually, slowly growing; first to their knees, and then higher and straighter into the sky. The will need to unfurl their buds and stretch out their leaves and petals.
(**Music Suggestion: 'In the Garden with Moo Music' on YouTube to accompany**)

Pass It

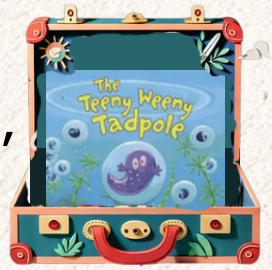
In a circle, the teacher begins by passing around a few imaginary objects—such as a wibbly jelly, a prickly cactus, a heavy rock, or a floating feather—so children can practice responding to different textures and weights. Once they understand the game, the teacher introduces objects linked to the topic of growth. First, the children carefully pass a fragile egg, then a second egg that gently wiggles as if something inside is beginning to hatch. Finally, the teacher reveals a tiny chick, modelling how to hold and stroke it gently before passing it around. The activity ends with a brief discussion about how the chick starts as an egg, then hatches, and will grow into a chicken, introducing the idea of growth and change.

Top tip! Add questions

If you want to get the students more engaged, why not ask what flower are you? Which colour? What does the chick feel like?

Activities

Reading of ‘The Teeny Weeny Tadpole’ by Sheridan Cain & Jack Tickle



Following the first two exercises, students sit in the circle and the teacher gets the suitcase. Sing the Suitcase Song and open the suitcase. Remove all of the items from the list of resources above, discussing each one as you bring it out, and ending with the story. Put the items on top of the suitcase so that all the children can see.

Spring Adventure

Next all children find a space for the adventure. Teacher plays ‘Spring’ from Vivaldi’s Four Seasons. The teacher talks the children through the adventure as they listen to the music.

Tadpoles

Children start as tiny tadpoles (how small are they? How do they move?) They might wave to mummy tadpole.

Lamb

Children then become the lamb in the story, snuffling around, walking on all fours and then jumping into the air saying ‘Boing! Springity-sprong!’

Rabbit

Children turn into the rabbit in the story. The might twitch their noses, stroke their long ears, wiggle their tails. They then start to jump and say ‘Boing! Jumpity-bump!’

Grasshopper

They then become the grasshopper with big eyes and springy legs. They jump with a ‘Boing! Hippity-hop!’

Frogs

The teacher then describes that they are the little tadpole again but they are growing bigger and bigger until finally they have long, strong legs of their own and have become a frog, leaping around. You could correlate any ‘threatening’ parts of the music to the frog jumping away from the big bad fish.

Reflection and Close

Afterwards, the teacher discusses the story, particularly how the tadpole grows and changes into a frog. Can they think of any other creatures that change form like this, for example, a caterpillar.

Further Reading

Lulu Loves Flowers, by Anna McQuinn
The Girl Who Planted Trees, by Caryl Hart & Anastasia Suvorova
The Secret Garden (abridged version illustrated by Alan Marks)
The Last Wolf by Mini Grey

Ideas for Older Classes

Activity Idea : The Seeds Journey

Children begin as tiny seeds being carried through the environment by different forces such as wind, water or animals. Once they "land," they improvise what happens next depending on the conditions around them: perhaps they fall into dry soil with too little water, perhaps they are shaded by a big tree, or perhaps they land in the perfect sunny, damp spot. Through movement and simple, imaginative role-play, they act out whether they grow successfully or fail to thrive, clearly showing how different environmental factors affect plant growth

Great for:

- **understanding what plants need to grow**
- **exploring seed dispersal**
- **recognising how environment affects survival**
- **simple scientific enquiry through physical storytelling**

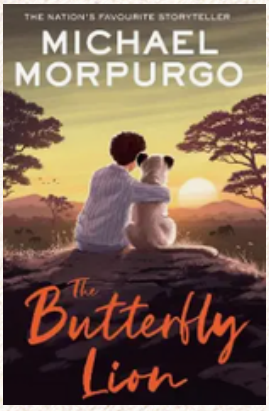
Activity Idea : Ecosystem - A Changing Habitat

Working in groups, children create a living ecosystem using their bodies to represent animals, plants, water sources, insects and natural features. Once the ecosystem is established, the teacher introduces changes such as deforestation, pollution, drought or the arrival of a new predator. Students improvise how their organisms would react, showing the impact on growth, food sources, shelter and survival. Through collaborative, in-role movement, they explore how a change in one part of an ecosystem affects every living thing.

Great for:

- **understanding interdependence in ecosystems**
- **exploring how environmental changes affect growth and survival**
- **linking drama to real-world ecological concepts**
- **supporting scientific reasoning and cause-and-effect thinking**

Book recommendation



The Butterfly Lion by Michael Morpurgo explores powerful themes of friendship, loyalty, loss, and the passage of time. At its heart is the deep bond between Bertie and the white lion cub he saves, a relationship that grows and changes as they are separated and reunited across continents and stages of life. The story also touches on personal courage, emotional resilience, and the way childhood experiences shape who we become. Through its gentle, reflective tone, the book deals with growing up, facing challenges, and learning to let go, all set against the broader backdrop of change and transformation in both people and animals.

The Butterfly Lion by Michael Morpurgo (Collins, 1996)

All of the ideas and discoveries made during the activities can be extended through follow-up writing and creative work. Students might write a story from the perspective of a growing seed, sapling or creature, describing the changes they experience as they develop. As a class, they could also create a mural showing different stages of growth — from tiny beginnings to fully grown plants, animals or ecosystems — helping them consolidate their understanding of how living things change over time.

Have any questions and want to know more about this resource? Or have any topics we might help inspire you to navigate? Contact education@newvictheatre.org.uk