Learning Activity 6

A Picnic Story

Setting the Scene
This is a class-based activity. You can adjust it to meet the needs of your learners or base it on one of the sensory stories listed opposite.

What to Do
Position your learners in a circle.

Begin with the custom-made sensory story and props from your picnic basket or box. For example:

• ‘(Learner’s name) went on a picnic and she brought a wonderful warm blanket to sit on.’

Encourage your learners to feel the texture of the blanket, giving them sufficient processing time.

• ‘(Learner’s name) went on a picnic and he brought a smooth, hard plate to eat from.’

Support your learners to feel and explore the shape and texture of the plate.

• ‘(Learner’s name) went on a picnic and he brought a spoon or fork to eat with.’

Help your learners to explore the spoon or fork and listen to the sound it can make when struck on a surface.

Repeat with as many picnic items as appropriate.

The Ant’s Picnic
Introduce your learners to the cut-outs/pictures/replicas of ants and explain that sometimes when we are on a picnic, we can see little ants scurrying about in the grass searching for food. Use your fingertips to pretend that ants are scurrying over your learners’ bodies.

Search online for the words, music and a video of the song ‘The Ants Go Marching’. Sing an appropriate number of verses from the song and model the actions as you sing.

Repeat the song, encouraging your learners to join in with the actions.

Further Suggestions

Sensory books
Make personalised sensory books for each learner, using a range of textures and fabrics.

You can enhance sensory stories by using apps such as the sounds of birds singing to create the atmosphere of being outside.

What You Need

• Search online for the song ‘The Ants Go Marching’
• A custom-made sensory story created to suit your learners’ needs
• ‘The Ant’s Picnic’ by Margo Fallis is suitable for all age groups. You can find it at www.electricscotland.com
• ‘Teddy Bears’ Picnic’ by Jimmy Kennedy (Aladdin Picture Books) for younger children
• ‘A Perfect Picnic’ (Sesame Street) is suitable for all age groups
• ‘We’re Going on a Picnic!’ by Pat Hutchins is suitable for all age groups
• ‘The Mice Go on a Picnic’ by Lucy Cousins
• ‘This is the Bear and the Picnic Lunch’ by Sarah Hayes and Helen Craig (Walker Books Ltd)
• ‘Yogi Bear cartoons’
• ‘The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch’ by Ronda Armitage and David Armitage (Scholastic)
• Extracts from books such as ‘The Famous Five’ have examples of picnics for older learners
• A plate
• Cut-outs, pictures or replicas of ants
• Sensory props, for example:
  – squeezy ketchup bottle or ziplock bag half filled with fluid hair gel
  – plastic rain hood that will make a distinctive sound when scrunched
  – picnic basket and picnic foods and drinks
  – vacuum flask
  – blanket.