The Wild Escape: Fox Learning Resource

Who this resource is for: EYFS Learners

What materials you'll need: paper plates, toilet roll tube, felt, fake fur, googly eyes, pencils, coloured pencils, felt tip pens, paints, sponges, old socks, safety pins, tissue paper, cotton wool.

Aims & objectives:

The activities in this resource are designed to take 2-3 hours but can be adapted depending on your group and setting.

Learners will:

- Explore a native UK creature
- Learn about its natural habitat, ecosystem and threats to its environment
- Use this knowledge to create an artistic response which can be entered into The Wild Escape online exhibition.

Curriculum links:

EYFS Framework:

Understanding the world: learners will *"Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants"*

Expressive arts and design: learners will *"safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function".*

Useful links:

Fox fact resource
Cartoon depictions of foxes
Fox drawing templates
Video - scroll down for video of a fox going in and out of a den.

Activities:

1. Introduce learners to the fox using a hi-definition image or a video. Elicit what the name of this animal is and what kind of animal (mammal). You can ask questions such as: has anyone ever seen a fox before? Where? Where do they live? What do they eat? Why do they avoid humans? Why do they roam around at night? What do they look like? What words can we use to describe them? Does anyone know any famous stories about foxes? Elicit descriptive words connected to parts of the fox's body, e.g. a red bushy tail; long whispers; sharp eyes.

2. Drama & movement activity 1: Using cartoon depictions of foxes as models (see resource above), learners invent a fox character. Encourage learners to think about

their fox's personality. Are they shy? Are they clever? Are they playful? Are they brave? Are they cunning? Do they wear clothes? What kind of clothes? You can encourage learners to think about props and accessories and how this adds to their character. You can model these characteristics with learners using facial expressions and movement exercises. Ask learners to give their fox a name, a place where they live (this can be wildly imaginative, for example in a magical treehouse or behind some dustbins on a street corner where there's a tiny door hidden to the human eye that leads to an underground network of fox dwellings).

3. Drama & movement activity 2: This activity is a variation on the game grandma's footsteps, only this time the learners will pretend to be foxes. Encourage learners to move on all fours, and to try to embody the personality of their fox from the previous exercise, imitating your modelling where appropriate. Explain to learners that when foxes roam around at night they try to avoid being seen by humans. You could ask, why might foxes be afraid of humans? Why do they move around at night? The task is, pretending to be a fox, learners move towards the human at the front of the room (this could be you as the teacher or another learner), who has their back to the rest of the learners. The aim is for the foxes to as quietly as possible get to the front and reach the food (you could bring a real "prize" into school for this). At random, the person at the front turns around, at which point the foxes must freeze. If they are caught moving, they go back to the beginning and have to start again.

4. Physical theatre exercise: Build a fox den! This is a cooperative exercise in which learners are encouraged to work together for mutual ends. You can use the resource above where (if you scroll down) there is a video of a fox going in and out of a den. Show learners this video. Divide learners into small groups of about 6 (adjust where appropriate depending on your class size). In their groups, using their bodies, learners will construct a fox den. Encourage learners to think about how they can show tunnels, entrances and ramps. You can model this using your own body. Give learners 5 minutes to make this, then you can 'freeze' the image. Learners from other groups can then pretend to be foxes and move around the shape the others have created. You can give each group 5 minutes, with each group having the chance to interact with the different shapes.

5. In this activity, learners draw a fox face from memory and without looking at the page. This activity is designed to allow learners to settle and focus after their movement-based activities. Equip each learner with pencils, coloured pencils or pens, and given them 5 minutes to represent a fox face – challenge them to close their eyes during this activity.

6. Make a fox tail. You will need: old socks, cotton wool or tissue paper (for stuffing), extra socks for making tassels, and safety pins. You can demonstrate how to make a fox tail using these materials. Ensure that adults only use the safety pins. When learners have finished, they can paint their tails using fabric paint.

7. Draw or paint a fox! Using a template (in web page above) encourage learners to use their fingers, sponges, colouring pens and paints to depict a fox. You can encourage learners to think about the fox's personality from the previous activity, associating personality traits with colour. You can also encourage learners to depict the fox in a habitat, asking learners to think about the kinds of places where foxes live (this can be real or imaginary). Feel free to use other materials and encourage learners to play with these. For example:
- Paper plates
- Toilet roll tube
- Felt
- Fake fur
- Googly eyes