

Giant Wooden Pyramids

EY06026/EY06027

These pyramids are a really open-ended resource. Children will love exploring them. When we observed the children they played with them in a variety of ways. Some enjoyed stacking and lifting them off the stand (repeatedly). Others used them in their construction play and linked them to other resources. One child lined them up in a pattern. For some children they were used symbolically ie. taking on another role such as a camera, or a phone. The pyramids are substantial in weight and can be used to describe which is the heaviest, lightest etc. They are a useful mathematical resource as they can be used for patterning, comparing, weighing and sorting.

- The wooden pyramids support various schema – for example, rotational schema as the pieces are spun round either on a flat surface or around the central spindle; horizontal trajectory schema, as children carefully place the different parts of the pyramids in lines or rows along a flat surface.
- Children can naturally explore the different shapes, either sorting them into their common shapes, or putting all the big ones together in one pile, the small ones in another and the rest in another pile, - or even making their own categories! – ‘Children begin to categorise objects according to properties such as shape or size’ – (Mathematics: Shape, space and measure).
- Being open ended, they can be used to support other areas – practice threading onto pipe cleaners or laces, thus encouraging fine motor control as well as engagement – encouraging the children to ‘have a go’ (Characteristics of Effective Learning).
- Use in conjunction with other small world objects – stack the shapes up and use them as rocks for the ‘lions’ to sit on; or towers around the four corners of a square of bricks, thus making your own castle; or laid out to provide ‘stepping stones’ across a pretend river. This encourages children’s imagination by providing stimulating play opportunities. Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play (C&L: Speaking, 30-50 months).
- The individual different shapes can represent a range of different items in role play – from doughnuts to flowers, from coins to cages. Practitioners can use the different items to engage in sustained shared thinking as the child is immersed in their play. Children can then extend this themselves as they play in a group – can play in a group, extending and elaboration play ideas (PSED: Making relationships 30-50 months).