

Active Worlds Dinosaur Mat



Product Code

AW8

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Active World Dinosaur Mat

Introduction

Active World mats are an ideal tool to help practitioners deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage, as they embrace elements of all four EYFS themes. Using the mats encourages children's individual confidence and capabilities as they engage in using the mats in different ways. The mats encourage children to share, take turns, to work collaboratively, to engage with key adults initially, but then to move off independently to develop their own learning. The range of mats, play a key role in extending children's development and learning. The mats can be used to cover all areas of learning and development, and show clearly how they are all equally important and inter-related.

The mats can be used with all ages of children, from birth upwards, depending on the resources and adult intervention used with them.

These notes are written mainly for children in Foundation Stage settings, but the principles are easily adaptable for younger children.

Aims & Objectives

- Children learn best when they are actively involved, enjoying what they are doing, through physical and mental challenges. Active Worlds enable children to experience learning through a multi-sensory approach which can engage and involve children for sustained periods. They provide learning opportunities for a wide range of curriculum areas, where children can freely explore materials within the confines of the tuff spot.
- There will be elements of consolidation, exploration, investigation, and fun in every activity.
- Children can have independence and control over their learning which keeps their interest and develops their creativity. They can also become absorbed in finding out about the world through their explorations, investigations and questions through using a wide range of resources with the mats.

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- All the activities can be free play, child initiated, where the children explore independently, or adult directed, where children are given specific tasks to undertake.

Links with Learning and Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Links can be made with every area of Learning and Development within the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have merely highlighted those links with the area Knowledge and Understanding of the World. Others are included generally in the next section.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World:

Can investigate objects and materials by using all their senses as appropriate.

- E.g. Using soap flake slime for the swamp; foliage for the trees, stones, rocks to create the landscape, the dinosaur nest, the volcano; wall paper pastes made up with blue food colouring for the meandering river, sand for the river bank, spider plants and house plant ferns for the 'trees', branches and logs for the fallen tree trunks

Can find out about, and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe.

- E.g. Can experience a themed play area and use the appropriate vocabulary – learn about the extinct creatures and classify them into appropriate groups – flying and walking, fast and slow, carnivores and herbivores; differentiating between living and non-living substances, discussing the natural landscape e.g. the active volcano
- Discover about places and environment; use geographical vocabulary such as volcano, forest, river, rocks, river bank, mountains, swamp; create landscapes by placing foliage, rocks, branches, sand etc; learn more about natural resources e.g. the difference between wet and dry sand, the different types of foliage etc.

Can ask questions about why things happen and how things work.

- E.g. Giving children time for exploratory play as well as directed tasks, thus providing them with a variety of opportunities for extending their language skills. Make a volcano from paper mache, put a yoghurt pot in the centre with bicarbonate of soda in it, gently pour a small amount of vinegar on top and stand back!

Can build and construct with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources and adapting their work where necessary.

- E.g. Give children leaves, plants, stones, rocks, etc to create their own Jurassic park. They can 'walk with dinosaurs'.

Can select tools and techniques they need to shape, assemble and join the materials they are using.

- E.g. Trees could be made from a range of collage materials, rocks could be made from play dough, dinosaur nest can be made from sand, play dough, twigs. The eggs can be made from salt dough.

Begins to differentiate between the past and the present.

- E.g. begin to use appropriate chronological language – in the past, long ago, extinct. It also gives the opportunity to classify into creatures from the past and present day. Make a set of creatures you would see today and those you would have seen long ago.

Ideas for use and links with other areas for Learning and Development:

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Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy: Opportunities for sorting (classifying animals into different groups); counting (numbers of animals, numbers of legs); comparing (sizes of animals, weight - heavy, light,); use of language – the long neck, the tall dinosaur, the short legs,) describe position (where things are in relation to each other, behind, in front, on top of, across, under, in); estimation (how many eggs in the nest, how many creatures can you see?); matching (pairing the dinosaurs with each other)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Is interested, excited and motivated to learn through this hands on experiential approach. Can work as part of a group taking turns, sharing, and collaborating. Discuss the differences between the predators and the victims – T Rex is the 'bully' type. Is confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in a familiar group.

Creative Development: Exploring colour, texture, shape form and space. Use their imagination to create different role play scenarios. Make sound effects for the rumbling volcano as it erupts (thunder tube, wobble a piece of cardboard). Responding in variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell touch and feel. Introduce a storyline or narrative into their play. Play alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme. Play co-operatively as part of a group to act out a narrative

Communication, Language and Literacy: Uses language to imagine and recreate their own stories about the dinosaurs – promoting imaginative discussion. Interacts with others, negotiating plans and activities and taking turns in conversations. Extend their vocabulary through contextual experiences e.g. volcano, carnivore, herd, brontosaurus, erupt, swooping and soaring etc. Attempts writing for various purposes – e.g. describe the dinosaur – fierce, sharp teeth and scaly skin. Is able to follow specific instructions about placing the dinosaurs e.g. put the turtles next to the river bank. Create narratives; listen and follow instructions; name and label; learn appropriate rhymes and songs – e.g. 'When a dinosaur's feeling hungry' Mark making – tracks in the sand from the dinosaurs.

Physical Development: Develop fine motor control – making tracks through the sand, roll the dough to make the eggs, position the animals appropriately; Gross motor control – make the flying creatures swoop and soar. Show awareness of space, or themselves and of others.

Suggestions

Resources: (Here are some ideas of what could be used – this is just the beginning!)

Giant and mini dinosaurs

Dinosaur eggs

Coloured sand

Food colouring

Wall paper paste

Rocks and pebbles

Thunder tube

Oasis

Matting

Mopani wood for the fallen trees

Improvisation - Make your own resources!

Dried peas and beans for pebbles

Foil/wallpaper paste for the river and swamps



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Shiny pebbles

Leaves (either real or from fabric/paper)

Make your own volcano (see earlier in notes for instructions)

Grass/cress seed

You could make your own canopy from green garden netting suspended over the tuff spot, so that the children are in their own enclosed world. You could weave leaves and ribbons into the canopy. You could suspend pterodactyl shapes from the canopy with relevant words on them e.g. dinosaur, brontosaurus, volcano, Jurassic, etc.

Care instructions

Use damp cloth to wipe surface.

We would recommend that you roll rather than fold your mat after use, with the picture facing outwards. Any wrinkles can also be removed by wafting a warm hairdryer over the mat.

To avoid creases store in a warm environment.



Active Worlds Mats:

- Transport Mat EY00257
- Minibeasts Mat AW12
- Seaside Mat AW13
- Lunar Mat AW9
- Builder's Yard Mat AW3
- Jungle Mat AW5
- Fairy Tale Mat AW6
- Arctic Mat AW7
- Town Scene Mat AW10
- Dinosaur Mat AW8
- Nursery Rhymes Mat AW11
- Below the Sea Mat AW4
- Playground Mat AW1
- Farmyard Mat AW2

See the full range at:

www.tts-shopping.com/activeworlds

