

Festivals are fun

Use this colourful poster with its illustrated action rhyme to encourage children to recall their own experiences of the fun and excitement that festivals can bring

Activities to support the Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Discuss what the children in the poster might be celebrating. Could it be a birthday party, perhaps, with games, dancing and presents? Ask about parties the children have attended, and encourage them to say what they like about such celebrations. Explain the meaning of the word 'anniversary' and give a few examples of things that are celebrated once a year.
- Read the rhyme and focus on the words 'secret presents'. Talk about how a wrapped present can contain a secret gift. Do they think it is better to receive a present that is expected or one that is a secret? Why does the instruction on the poster ask children to 'put finger to lips'? Explain that keeping a secret means not telling anyone about it and keeping lips closed with a finger indicates that you are not speaking. Ask children about any secrets that they have kept to themselves.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- The rhyme on the poster is an 'acrostic' poem, where highlighted letters spell out a word. Ask children to write down the capital letters in the order they occur and then read the word they have created. Try creating a list of names starting with each of these letters in order. Write the same word in lower case and think of words starting with these letters.
- Find the labels on the parcels in the poster. Discuss why labels and name cards are useful. Make some imitation parcels for a role-play party and write name labels to identify the recipients.

Mathematics

- Explore the parcels on the poster and identify the spheres, cylinders, cubes and cuboids. Make a selection of similar parcels by covering recycled boxes in wrapping paper. Ask children to sort them according to their shape.
- Count the number of children in the poster and then count the boys and girls separately. Does the number of boys and girls altogether match the total number of children counted? Use ten small world characters to represent these children and pose problems with them, for example, 'If two boys go home early how many will still be at the party?'

Understanding of the World

- Read the rhyme and find the words 'special sweets'. Explain that sweets are often eaten at festivals. Ask children to describe the sweets that they enjoy at these times. Make simple sweets for your role-play festivals, such as coconut burfi or peppermint creams (check for allergies first).
- Read the rhyme and then find the words 'twinkling lights'. Talk



How to use the poster

Create a large brightly coloured wall display entitled 'Festivals'. Mount the poster in the centre of the board, hang children's photographs and artwork depicting family celebrations around it and create a border with balloons. Hang EYFS links on colourful streamers at the front.

On a table below, display artefacts, such as cards and wrapped gifts, along with books associated with festivals. Invite parents to contribute resources for the display and to explore it with their children.

about the twinkling lights that we see during festivals, such as Christmas and Diwali. Discuss the significance of candles when celebrating birthdays.

Physical Development

- Read the rhyme and follow the actions given on the poster. Once children are familiar with them, decide together upon alternative actions, such as pretending to blow out candles for birthdays and making stars with fingers for twinkling lights.
- Discuss how the word 'festive' sounds a bit like 'festival'. Read the rhyme and suggest creating a role-play celebration. Make some healthy 'festive' treats, such as fruit kebabs and smoothies. Use the snacks to talk about the importance of eating fruit on a daily basis.

Expressive arts and design

- Explore the patterns of spots and stripes on the poster parcels. Identify the parcels that have plain wrapping paper. Create patterned wrapping paper from plain paper by printing shapes onto it with sponges.
- Talk about the clothes the poster children are wearing for their celebration. What do the children in your setting wear when they go to parties and special festivals? Have fun dressing up in party clothes for a role-play party.

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