

Notting Hill Carnival

The poster's vibrant images offer a stimulating visual resource to refer to during discussions about the Notting Hill Carnival and an informative extension to any linked activities

Activities to support the Early Years Foundation Stage

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Talk about the people in the poster and invite children to think of words to describe their facial expressions. How have face paints enhanced some of their expressions? Encourage children to talk about times when they might have reflected similar expressions. Have they ever had their faces painted? Explore facial expressions in mirrors and use face paints to enhance dolls' expressions.
- Explain the origins of the Notting Hill Carnival, and how families travel from afar to join the celebrations. Focus on the three children in the top centre image. Do the children think they are friends, or perhaps related to one another? Discuss the importance of sharing celebrations with friends or family. Encourage children to describe religious and cultural events that they have shared.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- Consider the colours of the costumes and think of words to describe them, for example, the 'warm yellow', 'sizzling gold', 'sparkling silver', 'fiery red' and 'burning orange' costumes, adorned with shiny accessories. Find contrasting words to describe the 'cool' white of the drums and musicians' outfits and the 'watery' blues and greens of other costumes.
- Read a story about a carnival, such as *Nini at Carnival* by Errol Lloyd, then choose an image to make up a story about. Perhaps a character had trouble finding a costume, like Nini, or they travelled from a distant country to join the festivities?

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

- Discuss the black and white costumes and decide together which animal they represent. Explain that carnival costumes often copy patterns from nature, such as the stripes of a zebra or the symmetry of a butterfly's wings. Invite children to draw their own costumes based on such patterns.
- Ask the children to identify the geometrical shapes painted around the sides of the steel drums. Make your own simple drums from upturned coffee tins. Cover the sides with white paper and create patterns by sticking different coloured geometric shapes onto it.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- Discuss the origins of the Notting Hill Carnival (see pages 14-15 and the official website, www.thenottinghillcarnival.com). Talk about how important it was for the Caribbean people who came to live in North London to maintain links to the cultural traditions of their home country. Find the Caribbean and London on a world map and discuss the distance in between.



How to use the poster

Display the poster in different areas to stimulate child-initiated ideas in, for example, a large open indoor or outdoor space along with dressing-up clothes and accessories; the music and sound area along with instruments and carnival music; the creative area along with exciting collage materials and brightly coloured papers.

- Make a display about Caribbean culture using information from the poster, this issue and the website.
- Suggest that children plan a carnival celebration of the cultures represented within your setting. Look at the poster for inspiration, for example, the Caribbean is represented with music by steel bands and exotic costumes of birds, butterflies and animals. What sort of music and costumes would feature in your carnival to represent the children's cultures?

Physical Development

- After looking at the headdresses people are wearing in the poster, set up a 'headdress making area' with brightly coloured paper, sequins, glitter and feathers. Provide mirrors and a range of joining materials such as ribbon, string, tape and glue.
- Take turns to make up a mime representing a poster image for others to guess, for example, sitting on a float with a tall headdress; swaying to a steel drum beat; prancing like a zebra.

Creative Development

- After discussing the poster costumes, provide light and floaty scarves, sparkly netting and shiny fabric for children to drape around themselves to create their own carnival atmosphere.
- Invite individuals to paint their favourite character from the poster and stick along a length of wallpaper to represent the busy carnival parade.

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