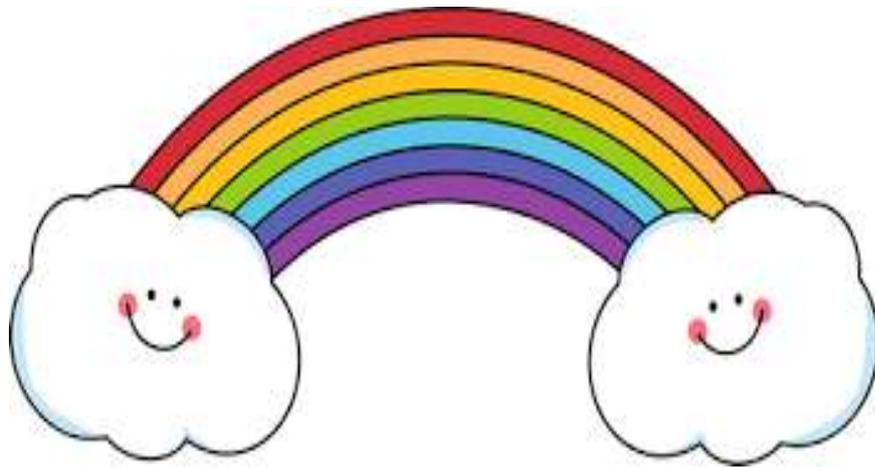


# 'The Rainy Day'



## **How does this story fit with the National Curriculum?**

Primary schools have the challenging task of finding different ways to fulfil the criteria of the National Curriculum and to enable children in their care to have the best support in terms of learning and personal/mental development. I have designed this performance of 'The Rainy Day' so that it satisfies many of the requirements of the KS1 curriculum in terms of science and English. In addition, I hope it will encourage a love of stories, reading books, learning about science and stimulating children's imagination long after the performance has finished.

This story has many sensory elements to engage children and encourage attentive listening including different characters, smells, items the children can touch, singing, action songs, visual stimuli and audience interaction. Through listening to the performance younger children can start to learn how language sounds and increase their vocabulary with words that they may not hear in everyday language.

There are great opportunities for discussion following this production. Children will be encouraged to take turns in asking relevant questions and listening to others asking questions at the end of performance. Watching the performance could then lead to class discussion where children can express their views, talk about the sequence of events, come up with ideas for stories of their own and create sentences based around the story. This should really stimulate their imagination about all the different things that can happen in their garden on a rainy day.

During the performance children are asked if they would like to participate in various roles in the story. The roles will require them to listen and respond to what I am asking them to do. They will be encouraged to speak audibly and fluently for the performance. They will have opportunities to improvise and respond appropriately to others in the role.

Volunteering to act out a role in a performance in front of their class mates could be a new experience for many of the children and I hope it will build their confidence and competence for speaking language.

I think the children will be really proud of their achievements in helping me tell the story. I have found this is particularly the case with children who are quite nervous of joining in. For these children it is especially rewarding when they take part and are so proud of themselves for achieving their goal, something they may not have thought they could achieve.

As part of the story the children are asked to identify a number of common wild flowers including daisies, dandelions and buttercups. This will support their work on plants. They also observe paper flowers unfolding as a result of capillary action. This is a great way to demonstrate the concept of capillary action and uptake of water by plants. This experiment could be taken further by using different types of paper,

card and materials. Children can explore the different properties of the materials by identifying that the more absorbent the material the quicker the flower opens (I will provide templates and experiment cards to the children so they can try this experiment at home or in the classroom).

The story can be used to talk about the seasons. Children are encouraged to talk about their observations of changes in the plants and animals in their garden on a rainy spring day compared to a sunny summer day. They will be encouraged to identify some common mini beasts found in their gardens and to observe their behaviour when it rains. They are encouraged to find out why the animals behave like this and ask questions about their environment e.g. why do worms come to the surface when it rains?

In this performance there are a number of experiments including making a cloud in a bottle, making paper flowers open using water and making a rainbow using food dye in tubes and adding water. These experiments are fantastic for giving children a flavour of science in a way where it appears to be magic. It will encourage them to ask 'how' and 'why' questions about what they have seen in the story e.g. Why does the cloud appear in the bottle?

The idea behind the story is to inspire the children to go out and explore their own environment just like the child in the story. The children are encouraged to look for changes that happen to this environment when it rains and ask questions.

What happens to the snails, worms and flowers in their gardens when it rains? Can they see a rainbow? What colours can they see in the rainbow? This story could be the inspiration for some great 'Rainy Day' themed art.

I have designed the performance to be multi-sensory and constantly changing with lots of different activities. Some activities will require either verbal or physical participation from the children.

I am confident that this rapidly moving format will help children to focus their attention on the performance for the whole session and provide lots for them to talk about.