

## Resource 4.1 Circle Time Lesson

### Activities

- **Warm Up.** Register Swap: an old favourite. When a name is called by me the child shakes hands and swaps places with the child in the middle saying good morning or some other chosen phrase. This means the children all end up sitting in different places from the start and not next to a special friend. It is particularly helpful in getting the children to mix when they first start school, and the exchanges can become more adventurous as time goes on and the children become more confident.
- **Game.** Partners: the children choose one of our circle time boxes and we play the game inside. Today the box is passed round so that everyone can choose a piece of a puzzle. They must not look at their piece until everyone has a bit then they try to find their partner, e.g. cup and saucer.
- **Rules.** The rules of circle time are very important, how to listen, how to sit, forming an inclusive circle, etc. and the children now keep everyone/anyone right.
- **Emotional Literacy.** Pick a face and share a time: in another box I have a set of large faces, today these are happy, sad or angry. I developed this game with an autistic child in mind but it works well for all. Over time the children become very supportive of each other during this activity and will chip in with suggestions/additions to the initial story.
- **Confidence Game.** Action People: another box is opened containing card people with actions written on them. The children roll a dice to see how often the action must be completed.
- **Quiet Close.** Pass a Smile: the smile is passed around the class circle of sad faces and put on each face, a quiet friendship game which requires no speaking.

### Reflection and Comments

T Choose a face from the box, but don't look – no cheating!

Pupil K Why not?

T to class Can you tell her?

Pupil J It spoils the fun!

Pupil A It's not fair! [Good understanding!]

The children asked for the soft toy Ba-Ba Black Sheep to pass round for support and chose the rhyme Zeenty, Teenty, Feggery, Fell to decide whose turn was next – a good choice.

Pupil C started and chose a sad face: 'My Mum made me sad, she was very angry last night'. We discussed why she might have been angry. The children thought he must have been bad and also that his Mum was probably tired. They agreed that Mum still loved C but were not all agreed on whether she was fair in sending him to bed. They had other suggestions for punishments and for what can make Mums sad!

Pupil K chose anger: 'My big sister hits me!' A problem the children know well.

I asked: How does that make you feel? Then to the class, what should he do? Is that the best way? What else could you do? What would Mummy do? Is that fair?

Pupil J chose happy: *My Mum made me happy 'cause she let me do what I wanted. She let me play with my toys.*

T Why do you like that?

Pupil J Cause it's what I like to do.

T What does Mum like to do?

Pupil J Stay in bed. The other children mostly agreed that that was what Mums liked best.

Evaluation: a good session. Although similar to past ones, there was more confidence from the children about how to tackle it. W still refusing at start but contributed to discussion later. S passed on a turn with the action people. Think I'll try circle time with puppets for early literacy next week – smaller groups, better results?

## Resource 4.2 Small World Play

It is fair to say Playmobile characters are great if you have them, however characters from food chain promotions, cartoon or film characters are well known to the children and can all work well too. Equally, dolls house people can successfully be replaced with homemade characters, made from pipe cleaners and cloth or modelling clay, adding a particularly personal touch.

- The scene can be set with dolls house furniture used on a table top or quiet corner. So too by adding toy boats, vehicles, or animals.
- Miscellaneous small blocks or off-cuts of wood sanded at the edges can make any type of imaginary world.
- A tray of sand or pebbles makes an interesting play base.
- A shoe box, grocery box or fancy treasure box can add to the staging.
- Old wallpaper rolls or large sheets of paper and pens or chalk can be used to draw landscapes, roads and maps.
- Natural items like leaves, twigs, pebbles or interesting stones collected by the children add to any imaginary world.
- Art straws, sequins, buttons, wobbly eyes, bits of fabric, craft paper, can all be used to create imaginative storylines.

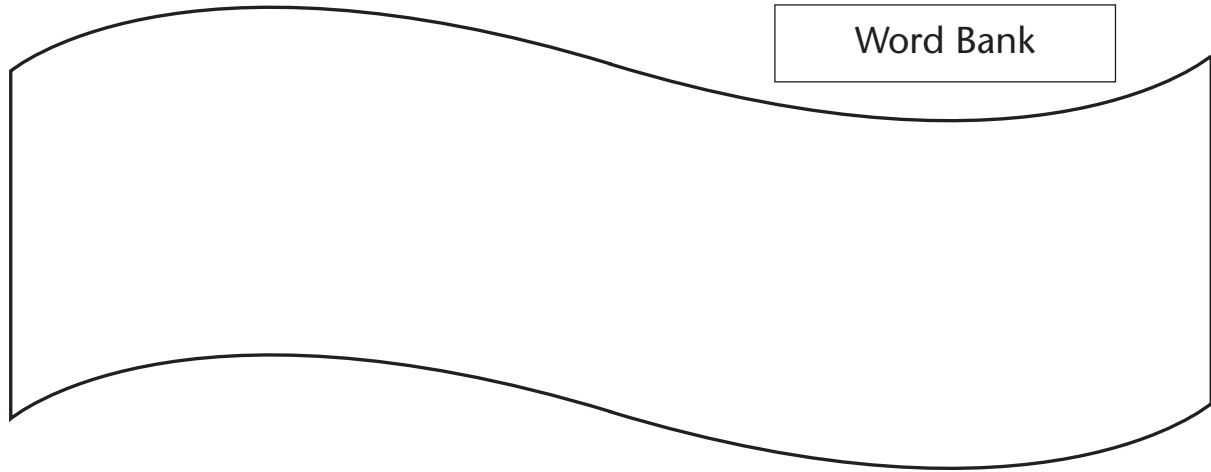
When children are used to playing and making up storylines they will enjoy sharing them with their classmates. Recording these as short animated films can extend both literacy and creativity at all ages.

## Resource 4.3 Wanted Poster and Resource Sheets

Walt: We are learning to write a personal story.

### *Friends*

Word Bank



Wilf: Think of a special time you had with a friend.

What does your friend look like?

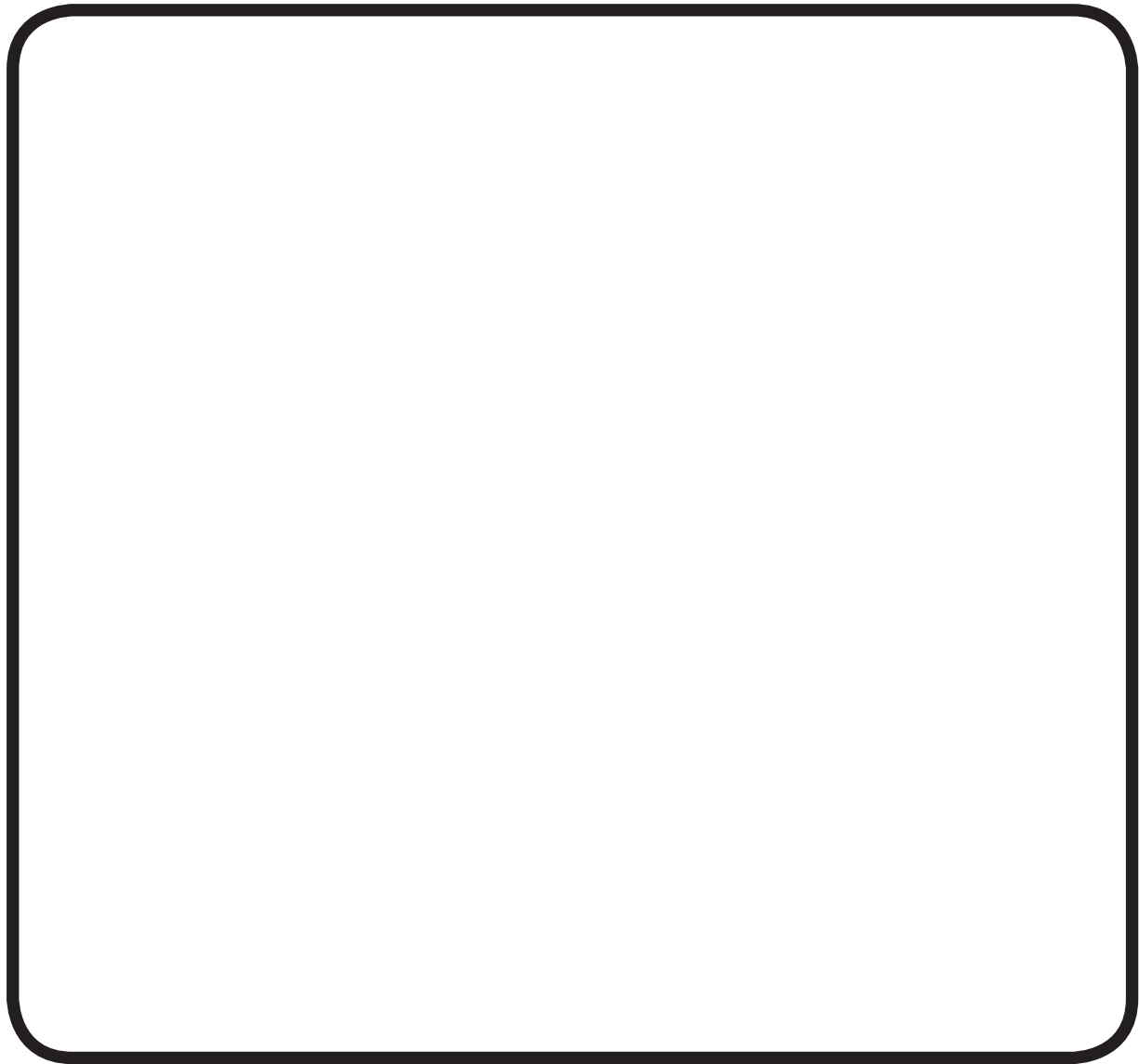
What do you like them?

Where were you playing?

What were you playing?  
What happened?

Resource 4.3 (Continued)

# Wanted



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## Resource 4.4 Parachute Games

**General Comments:** Parachute games are a fun way to develop cooperation and resilience with all age groups. Children do get very excited when using a parachute so it does help to have a few basic rules.

- They should never put their head through the hole in the middle.
- They must spread out around the parachute so there are no big spaces or crushes.
- They should grip the parachute with thumb under – fingers on top.
- They should not pull the parachute down tight on anyone underneath so that they are trapped. If running under the parachute they should go straight out the other side and not hide underneath.
- Break your rules and they sit out a turn.

1. **To Start:** use the tune *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* to sing 'This is the way...'

This is the way we 'walk' the chute,

'Walk' the chute, 'walk' the chute.

This is the way we 'walk' the chute, at [name] primary school.

The children pull the chute out into a circle then holding it with one hand all walk round in the one direction while singing, then swapping hands walk back in the other direction. This is not easy to start with but learning to work together is fun. You can make up lots of different verses, for example: jump the chute, hop the chute, dance the chute, wave the chute ... End with pass the chute. While singing this verse the children stand still, but pass the chute edge round.

2. **Sharks:** a big favourite. The children hold the chute about waist height and make waves while 2 or 3 chosen 'sharks' go under the chute. They grab a standing child's ankles, this child then shouts *shark* and they swap places, the new child becoming a shark. Somehow you always end up with more children underneath than you started with, but it's good fun.

3. **Swap:** once the children can cooperatively raise and lower the chute then as it goes up call a group of children to 'swap' by running under the parachute and out the other side. For example, all the red group, all those with pet dogs, all who are 5 years old, all the boys, all those wearing green, all who like ... Remember to include yourself in some of the swaps and to encourage the children to take turns in thinking up new swaps.

4. **Waves:** the children all take their socks and shoes off and sit around the parachute. Holding the chute near the floor they make waves and then a few children can go on top of the chute and try to walk through the water. The rippling effect is quite disorientating particularly for younger children, but they love it!

5. **Cat and Mouse:** this is almost an extension of Waves. This time when the children make 'waves' 1–3 mice go underneath while a cat goes on top and tries to work out where the mice are. You might be surprised how difficult this can be.

6. **Tents:** in this game the children raise and lower the chute until they have lots of air trapped then after three bring it down behind their backs and sit underneath, their backs forming the sides. The dome created makes a lovely den for a sing song or short story.

7. **To Finish:** it is fun to let some children lie underneath and to make waves on top of them. On the signal 'Pop' everyone around the edge needs to let go. If you keep holding on then the parachute will come to you.

## Resource 4.5 Ideas for 'A Pocket of Instant Fun'

Catching bubbles	Wave a bubbles wand creating a stream of bubbles to chase, jump and catch. This develops awareness of personal space.
Streamers	These are great to use like kites when running about – I find the children are very inventive with what to do with them.
Ladybird stones	Hide and seek is a popular game but difficult to play in the open space of most playgrounds. I have a bag of pebbles painted red with black spots. They are good fun for one group to hide and then another to find.
Challenge cards	How many windows, fence posts, triangles, cracked stones can you find?
Matchboxes	Matchboxes are quite inexpensive to buy. Destroy the matches then challenge the children to find things which will fit inside.
The leaf game	Find me a leaf the same shape/size as, e.g., your hand.
Scavenger hunt	Find natural objects which start with each of the letters in a given word.
A couple of magnifying glasses	Organise a Wild Beast Hunt. Every play area has some mini beasts to find.
Snow building	Do you always need to build a snow- 'man'? Take one interesting object out to add to the best design idea the children can build.
Chalk	Children draw around their friends or their shadows and write their names. Draw hopscotch and peevers boards.
Marbles	A simple starter game is to draw a circle then take turns trying to knock marbles out over the circle line.
The washing line	For large group skipping games, tugs of war or simply holding and taking for a walk!
Elastics	Great when used for jumping games.
A ball of string	For measuring and comparing around the area or playing cat's cradle.
A hat	The hat wearer leads the silly parade – follow my leader.

These activities are all really, quite simple and very versatile. They are simply good fun and seldom played the same way twice. Remember to put all natural items back in their homes at the end of the games.

## Resource 4.6 Ideas to Establish Creative Outdoor Fun

An old rug	To sit on and enjoy watching others.
One or two large cardboard boxes	Quickly become trains, trucks, dens or homes.
A bucket for collecting: leaves	Collect a bucket of leaves then use to count and sort into smaller collections. Discuss sorting criteria used.
An old sheet, curtain or blanket	Great fun for developing teamwork – as children take turns in carrying each other around. Or use it to build a shelter.
A bucket of water and some large paint brushes	To paint the school – hours of harmless fun.
A parachute	A real playtime treat.

## Resource 4.7 Games Instructions

General comment: I often let the children explain a game to the group and then together we set the rules. My philosophy is that a game can change each time it is played but the rules we decide together for that game session are for everyone.

### **1. Sleeping Lions**

This is a game which I often use as a cool down at the end of a gym or games session. All the children should find a space where they are not touching then lie down and close their eyes like sleeping lions. I then tip toe around and gently touch any child who is moving; they then get up to join the line ready to leave the hall to return to class.

### **2. Worry Beads**

Everyone sits in a circle with a tray of threading beads in the middle. As the children pass round the threading lace they select and thread one bead if they have a worry they would like to share or discuss with the group. It is important that the children know that it is quite okay to pass the thread on without adding a worry bead.

### **3. Squashed Bananas**

The children sit in a circle. A rhyme is repeated while passing a soft toy to choose one child. All the rest of the children take turns to ask that one child questions but they may only answer 'squashed bananas'. If they succeed in making the child laugh then the toy is passed on and another child chosen. Once the children know the game quite well they can choose their own silly word, e.g sausages. Example questions: What have you got on your feet? What do you put in your school bag?

### **4. Line Up**

This is a fun game for getting the class lined up or mixed up. For example you can ask the children to think of the first letter in their name then line up in the order of the alphabet. You can give each child a number then ask them to line up in numerical order. They could line up by height, biggest or smallest first. Alternatively you could ask all the odd numbers to make one line and the even numbers another.

### **5. Choosing Rhyme**

Zeenty teenty feggery fell, pompalerie jig. Every man who has no hair generally wears a wig.