

Mark Making / Writing Area

Learning

Although the primary aim of the mark making area is to support children's development in communication, language and literacy, learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage can take place here. It is an area which offers opportunities for children to:

- Select and use resources independently.
- Make marks and attempt to write for different purposes.
- Begin to record their mathematical ideas, draw shapes and form numerals.
- Select from a widening range of tools and techniques to suit their needs.
- Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through drawing and mark-making.
- Handle 'writing' tools and resources, such as scissors with increasing confidence and control.

Location

- Provide opportunities for mark making inside & outside.
- Consider having mobile as well as static areas i.e. concertina toolbox or rucksack or writing 'caddy'.
- Locate near role-play and construction, if possible.
- Always include resources for writing in the role-play area eg shopping lists, diaries, phone pads, post-its - meaningful context.
- Consider scale - very large eg frieze paper or tiny notebooks.
- Include display space for children's mark making
- Allow children to create their own displays eg pin boards, notice boards, magnetic boards
- Provide message boxes/posting boxes.
- Provide accessible, labelled storage for resources.
- Encourage communal mark making efforts.



Resources

- Stimulating, exciting range - variety not quantity,
- Include alphabet resources magnetic letters, abc frieze, picture dictionaries
- Well presented, clean and well organised
- A designated space for daily independent writing.
- Whiteboards or laminated white paper and dry wipe pens.
- Decorator rollers magic boards, slates.
- Chalks - inside and outside
- Water and large brushes.
- Pencils that are regularly sharpened.
- Coloured crayons, biro, glitter pens, highlighters & felt pens that work!
- Core of basics - but special items added periodically to maintain interest.

- 'Commercial' - linked stationery eg Ben 10, High School musical (reflecting children's interests and gender preferences).
- Tools eg staplers, hole punchers, glue sticks, sticky tape on dispenser, mini staplers, scissors, paper clips, treasury tags, rulers, calculators,
- Stamps (real 100 for £1), envelopes,
- Old diaries, card, coloured paper.
- Laminated name cards with child's photo.
- Ink stamps.

Adult role

- Supporting and modelling, not directing.
- Encouraging children to mark make: in session, during activities and in specific areas.
- Creating and then modelling meaningful mark making opportunities in role-play situations.
- Displaying and celebrating the process of mark making.
- Valuing all mark making at whatever stage of development.
- Developing parent awareness of developmental stages of mark making. Encouraging them to value child's marks.
- Providing appropriate alternatives to dot to dot, tracing templates, yellow felt tip, copy writing.
- Using sensitive terminology eg use "book writing", not "real writing".
- Encouraging parent volunteers to spend time modelling writing, particularly dads.