



Core Activity

Activity	Small world play
Main Focus	Spatial awareness

Possibilities for additional maths learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Counting	<input type="checkbox"/> Composition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cardinality
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subitise	<input type="checkbox"/> Comparison	<input type="checkbox"/> Measure
	<input type="checkbox"/> Shape	<input type="checkbox"/> Pattern	<input type="checkbox"/> Spatial awareness

Activity Plan

Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Decide on your theme</u> - choose a subject for your small world that most children have experience of, or at least an interest in such as farm animals, families, parks etc. ➤ <u>To enhance your current small world play</u> - http://littleworldsbigadventures.com/a-beginners-guide-to-small-world-play/ has some lovely ideas such as dinosaur land, rock pools, lunar landscape, frog pond, fairy garden, farm, sports arena, city in a cardboard box with ideas on supporting books and rhymes you can use alongside the chosen theme. ➤ <u>Collect your materials</u> - be inspired by what you already have in the setting with some enhancements from your kitchen, garden or anywhere else within reach. Part of the fun of small world play is setting the scene and children love to be involved in creating small worlds and like to hunt for items they might want to use. Add elements of sensory play too like sand, water, and straw. The following items are really useful additions for small world scenes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large, shallow tubs – e.g. tuff trays, underbed storage boxes ● Car tyres, wooden barrels or large plant pots ● Large rocks and pebbles ● Sand, soil, crumpled paper ● Small animals, sea creatures, buildings, dinosaurs, figures, cars etc. ● Fabric and materials. ➤ <u>Set the scene</u> - the younger the children are, the simpler you want to keep your small world with maybe one element of sensory play. You will need space to set up the small world resources and may choose to do this on the floor or in a contained space such as a tuff tray, or you may wish to use toys such as a play barn or make a scene from a cardboard box.

Activity
Children as young as 2 years old can engage in simple small world play and start telling their own stories. Notice symbolic play as it starts to emerge (when they can pretend an object is something else).

Small world play is acting out scenarios (scenes from real life, stories and/or imagination) in a miniature play scene, created with small figures and objects. Set up your small world experience and allow children to play observing and supporting them.

Use lots of mathematical language during small world play with children – <https://www.ncetm.org.uk/self-evaluation/browse/topic/385>

Comparing words

Small and large, tall and short, fast and slow, heavy and light, hot and cold, high and low, near and far, young and old.

Positional words

In, out, next to, behind, over, under, round, through, opposite, inside, outside.

Directional words

Forward, backward, up, down, straight on, left, right.

Ordinal words

First, last, second, third, end, beginning, before, after.

Shape words

Round, curved, wavy, straight, sloping, corners, pointed, sides, flat, circle, square, triangle.

Calculating words

More, less, the same, many, lots, fewer, greater than, more than, less than.

Time words

Today, tomorrow, yesterday, morning, afternoon, night, the days of the week.

Young children find time a difficult concept to understand and one that develops as the child matures. Initially, the words they use are mostly related to the here and now.

Comment as you play with children incorporating mathematical language such as “I wonder...”, “what a lot of cars you’ve got!”, “the little boy is climbing up the stairs”, “that’s a heavy rock!”, “the baby is under the blanket”, “let’s go down the straight road” etc.

Use open ended questions to encourage their thinking, “where do you think the children sleep/cars park?”

Encourage children to estimate or count by pointing if they are able and then count with them.

Support children to problem solve in small world play – if all of the cars won’t fit in the garage support children to work through this by reasoning and experimenting.

Extension Opportunities

- ✓ Store common themed sets of small world toys in small containers or bags, labelled and ready to use.
- ✓ Gather a small selection of books to match each theme and set it in a basket next to the small world scene.
- ✓ Introduce number rhymes that link to the small world theme.
- ✓ Add small world enhancements to other areas of the setting to support learning through role play e.g. add toy sea creatures such as crabs, starfish and small fish, a fishing net; bucket and spade to water areas or make a rock pool scene.
- ✓ Try adding a box of recycled cartons, tubes and boxes.