



DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL CRAFT AND GIFT IDEAS

Creative development

Early Learning Goal

Use their imagination in art and design, music, dance, imaginative and role play and stories.

Group Size

Whole group, over a period of time.

BEAUTIFUL BOATS

What you need

Several large cardboard boxes big enough for one or more children to sit in; smaller boxes for the head and tail; flexible card; red, blue and yellow paint mixed with PVA glue; large brushes; cardboard tubes; crêpe paper; string; PVA glue; sticky tape.

Preparation

Make two holes at each end of the boxes and tie them together with string to make one long boat. Cut the crêpe paper into streamers.

What to do

- Help the children to create a dragon's head and tail using a smaller box and pieces of card. Split the cardboard tubes part way up at each end. Attach one tube to the head and one to the tail with sticky tape.
- Work with the children to attach the head and tail to the main body of the boat. Splay the ends of the cardboard tubes and tape them securely to the box.
- Paint the dragon boat in bright colours, leaving the centre of the eyes blank until you are ready to start the race.
- Help the children glue on crêpe paper streamers for a mane.
- When the dragon boat is finished, have a ceremony to 'awaken' the dragon by marking the centre of the eyes.
- Make enough dragon boats for all of the children to sit in.
- Encourage the children to role-play an exciting dragon boat race.

Support and Extension

Make a smaller boat for the younger children and prepare well in advance so that they can paint the boxes for short periods over a few days. Older children can plan a more elaborate end product.

Further Ideas

- Talk about folk tales associated with the dragon boat festivals. Once in south-west China, there was a dragon that ate a fisherman's son. In anger, the fisherman burnt down the dragon's home. The fire burned for nine days and cooked the dragon. Villagers from five villages shared out the cooked dragon meat and ate it, just like the dragon had eaten the fisherman's son. Now the dragon boats go down river to each of the five villages to ask the dragon to bless them.

