

Picnic time for teddy bears

This attractive poster will encourage the children to develop observation and matching skills by making comparisons between the objects around the border and those on the teddy bears' plates

Activities across the curriculum

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Ask the children why they think the teddies are wearing sunhats. Do the children wear sunhats when they go out in the sun? What else do they do to protect themselves from the sun? Discuss the importance of wearing protective clothing and sunscreen, drinking lots of water, and staying in the shade when it is very hot.

Cut out a coloured card circle, large enough to cover each individual image around the poster's edge. Let the children take turns to cover an image while the rest of the group look away, and then turn around and try to guess what is under the circle.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Draw the children's attention to the teddies' expressions on the poster and say that they look as if they are having a conversation. Divide the children into groups of four and encourage them to take on the role of the teddies and act out the scene using their own words.

Help the children to read the words next to the images on the poster at their own levels, for example, from simply discussing which images are described by two words, to explaining about the silent 'w' in 'wrap'.

Mathematics

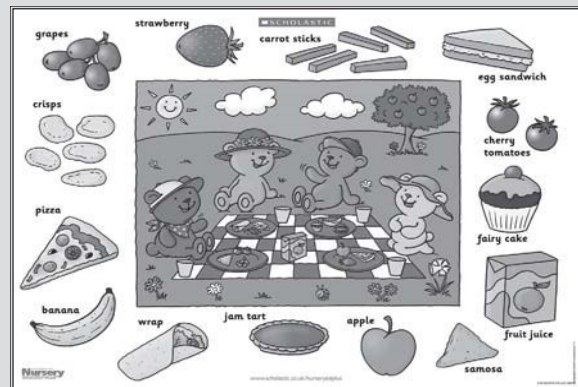
Use the poster to develop counting skills. Ask appropriate questions such as 'How many teddies can you count?' and 'Is there a cup and plate for each teddy?'. Make this practical by using real teddies and plastic picnic sets. Encourage the children to match objects around the edge of the poster to those on the picnic in the centre. Ask questions, for example, 'Can you find two groups of five carrot sticks?' and 'Can you find the triangular samosas?'.

Understanding of the World

Look at the poster together. Ask the children if they think it is a good day for a picnic. Why? Draw their attention to the way that the teddies are dressed and the weather conditions. Ask the children to say what they think would happen to the teddies if it began to rain. How could they protect themselves from getting wet, and their picnic from being ruined? Ask for parental permission for the children to taste and handle foods. Check for any food allergies and dietary requirements. Talk about the similarities and differences in the sandwich, samosa, pizza and wrap on the poster. Provide examples of each, cut it into bite-size pieces. Let the children taste the food and encourage them to talk about their preferences and their reasons.

How to use the poster

Create a 'Teddy bears' picnic' display with the poster as a centrepiece. Surround it with the children's artwork, such as collage picnic meals and photographs of the children during picnic activities with their teddies. Add appropriate captions



Use the poster to introduce discussion about the importance of a healthy diet. Ask for parental permission for the children to taste and handle foods. Check for any food allergies and dietary requirements. Identify the poster fruits and vegetables and provide the children with examples to cut up and taste. Explain the meaning of a 'balanced meal' in the context of the poster.

and links to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Set up a teddy bears' picnic on a table below using teddy bears, plastic plates and cups, and imitation food, replicating the poster as closely as possible.

Physical Development

Introduce the term 'finger food', and consider saying 'paw food' for teddies. Explore the picnic food on the poster and discuss how it can easily be eaten with fingers. Present the children with whole items from the poster, for example, carrots, apples and bananas, and ask them to cut them up to share using blunt knives.

Expressive arts

Make up a song linked to the poster to the tune of 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush':

'What have you got on your picnic plate, picnic plate, picnic plate?

What have you got on your picnic plate, at the teddy bears' picnic?'

Invite the children to sit in a circle around the poster and take turns to say or point to three picnic items at the end of each verse. Discuss whether their individual choices are 'balanced'. Invite the children to draw or paint food items from the poster that they would like to eat on a paper plate, and to describe their picnic to the rest of the group.

Jean Evans is an early years consultant and author.