

Themes for early years

**STEPPING STONE**

Understand that equipment and tools have to be used safely.

**EARLY LEARNING GOAL**

Handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. (PD)

**ASSESSMENT**

Observe the control individuals have as they use scissors. How much support do they need? Are they aware of safety issues?

# Spirals

**What you need**

Photocopiable page 51, 'Make a spiral' copied onto card; scissors; thread; pictures of snails, spiders' webs, springs, spiral staircases and the 'spiral' parts of some plants; magnifying glasses; film clip of a snail from the CD-ROM.

**What to do**

Show the children the selection of 'spiral' pictures and invite them to describe what they can see and try to follow the spiral shapes with their fingers.

Ask the children to look closely at their fingertips. Can they see any spirals? How do they look under a magnifying glass? Do the spirals on all of their fingers look the same?

Explain that you would like the children to make their own spiral shape by cutting carefully around the thick black lines of the spiral on the prepared sheets of card.

When the children have finished cutting show them how to pull out their cards to form a spiral shape. Add a thread to the middle of each finished spiral. Hang the spirals near breezes from windows or above radiators where they will move gently in the air currents.

**Discussion**

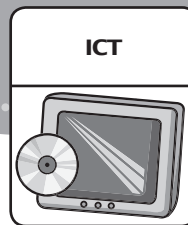
When the children are exploring the pictures, introduce the word 'spiral' and explain that some shapes used in man-made objects are copied from nature, for example, springs and spiral staircases. Can they think of any creatures associated with spiral shapes? Watch the CD-ROM film clip and discuss the spiral shape of the snail's shell.

**Follow-up activities**

- Use washable ink on fingers to make finger print patterns on paper.
- Ask the children to hold hands and make a spiral snail shell shape together, moving round and round to make the coil shape even tighter.
- Say the poem 'Snail' on page 90.

**Differentiation**

Support younger children with using scissors if necessary. Challenge more able children to draw their own spiral shapes onto a circle of card and then suggest that they coil and glue string around the pattern to make a spiral coaster.

**ON THE CD-ROM**

- Photocopiable sheet 'Make a spiral'
- Film clip of a snail
- Poem 'Snail'