

Habitats: Activities Menu

- Clay Birds
- Fantasy Film Butterflies
- Indoor Fishing
- Origami Butterflies
- Sensory Ideas
- Make your own Terrarium
- Under the Water
- Water Painting

Clay Birds

Materials List:

- Air-drying clay
- Cocktail sticks
- Clay tools
- Assortment of feathers

Instructions:

1. Spend time talking about the species of birds that can be seen along the canal. Why not go on a visit and see what you can spot together? Grey Herons, song thrushes, reed buntings and kingfishers can all be found along the canal.
2. Using air drying clay, create a small ball in your hands.
3. Push down with your thumb to create a hole on top of the ball, about half way in.
4. Use your forefinger and thumb to pinch a small beak on one side of the ball.
5. And on the other side of the ball create a tail feather.
6. Add eyes and details using a cocktail stick.
7. You can add tail feathers too to your bird.
8. If you want to hang the birds, make a vertical hole through the clay with a cocktail stick, to put string through.
9. Leave the clay to set – you could even paint the birds when they have dried.

Fantasy Film Butterflies

Materials List:

Fantasy Film (assortment of colours)

Thin wire

Florist Tape

Pliers

Instructions:



1. Using thin wire, create 4 x hoops, around 6cm in diameter (see Fantasy Film instruction sheet for images of each step). Make these hoops into heart shapes and twist the ends so that they are solid shapes.



2. Holding the wire, scoop into the fantasy film (like you're scooping out some sugar from a sugar bowl). Hold it over the pot for around 1 minute to get rid of any drops.



3. On an angle, put your heart shaped wire into a piece of dry oasis, polystyrene or another holder to dry for around 10 minutes.



4. Once the 4 x heart shapes are completed you can construct the final butterfly by using additional wire and florist tape.



5. Overlap the wings and secure in the middle to finish your butterfly. You could even hang them together near a window!



Indoor Fishing

This is a great activity for groups in shared spaces such as lounges. Why not have some water-themed music playing, such as Two Little Fishes or Yellow Submarine?

Materials List:

- Water Painting (from other activity)
- White Card
- Fish Template
- Scissors
- Small Magnets
- Double Sided Tape
- Wooden Dowel
- String
- Coloured Pens

Instructions:

1. If you have already done the Water Painting activity, use that as the base.
2. Cut out fish templates from white card.
3. Decorate individual fish with coloured pens.
4. Add magnets to the back of each fish template.
5. Create fishing rods from dowel and string. Make sure your magnet is attached to the end of the string.
6. Go indoor fishing!
 - Ask the group to fish for an 'orange fish'
 - To fish for a fish with a large tail

Origami Butterfly

Materials List:

- A4 Coloured Paper
- Pipe cleaners – Assortment of Colours

Additional Materials:

- See-through thread
- Paint/Glitter Glue
- Brushes

You could expand this activity by creating more than one butterfly and hanging these from the ceiling or window using see through thread. Once made, you could also paint and decorate the butterfly wings with paint or glitter.

Instructions:

1. Begin by selecting two pieces of Coloured A4 Paper.
2. With both pieces of paper, create a zigzag, fan fold all the way down.
3. Once the two pieces of paper are in two strips, fold them in half, length ways.
4. Select which colour you would like to be the top wings of the Butterfly and which you would like as the bottom wings.
5. Make sure the points of the V folds are touching.
6. Using a Coloured pipe cleaner, attach the two sets of wings together.
7. Curl the additional part of the pipe cleaner into antennae.
8. Spread the wings and your Origami Butterfly is complete!

Sensory Ideas

Sound

- Take a trip to the canal and record various nature sounds using the 'Mad Pad' iPad app. You could then create a soundscape based on nature along the canal.

Visual

- Take a trip to the canal and see what you can spot.
- Create a list of what has been spotted, e.g. grey heron, song thrush, butterflies etc.

Touch

- Bubbles.
- Different temperatures of water, including warm, cold and ice.
- Fish Skin.
- Feathers (Birds).

Smell

- Collect various natural materials, e.g. pine, flowers, grass and invite participants to smell them and discuss the smells, and anything it may make them think of.

iPad App Ideas

- These Apps are specifically for iPads and may not be available on other tablets.
 - Koi Pond Lite
 - Fluid 2
 - Butterflies
 - Mad Pad
 - Nature Scenes

Make your own Terrarium

Materials

- Terrarium Container – Jars, Fish Bowls or a specific Terrarium bought container
- Stones
- Charcoal
- Moss
- Small Indoor Plants, e.g. cactus, succulents, grasses, small ferns (you will need to source these yourself)
- Other decorations if desired

This is a multi-sensory activity. All materials should be explored by using touch, smell and sound before placing in your terrarium. Why not have a trip to the Bridgewater Canal and collect objects, bring them back to put in your terrarium!

Instructions

1. Begin by preparing your container you have chosen to use for your Terrarium. Make sure it is clean and dry.
2. Add about 2cm stones to your jar (for drainage).
3. Carefully sprinkle carbon on top of the stones, enough just to cover them (this will keep the terrarium healthy).
4. Carefully sprinkle a 2cm layer of soil on top of the charcoal.
5. Add a thin layer of moss over the soil.
6. Place the plants one by one in the jar, poking a hole for the roots into the layers of material. Try to make sure the layers don't get mixed up.
7. Add any stones, twigs or other decorations to finish the overall look of the terrarium.



Caring for your Terrarium

- Over time, monitor your terrarium's water needs based on how dry the soil is. For terrariums with closed lids, if water is dripping down from the top, open the lid to let some evaporate. Likewise, you may need to add more if it looks parched. You shouldn't need to water them very often.
- If leaves die or wilt, remove them from the terrarium immediately to maintain the health of the little eco system. If an entire plant dies, take it out.
- Don't place in direct sunlight. Remember that these are essentially little greenhouses and direct sunlight through the glass will trap heat and scorch the plants. Place in indirect light for best results.

Under the Water

Materials

- Plastic Water Bottle
- Food Colouring – Selection of colours
- Decorations, such as Gems, Glitter, Grass, Miniature under the water pieces
- Vegetable Oil

This activity would complement the ‘Water Painting’ activity and you could explore water through creating a sensory water bottle before painting. Once made, this bottle can be used as a sensory activity in itself.

Instructions

1. Choose a water bottle – any size or colour.
2. Fill your water bottle about 2/3 full with water.
3. Add some food coloring of your choice.
4. Add your decoration (glitter, gems, jewels, beads, sequins, etc.)
5. Add vegetable oil to the remaining volume of the bottle.
6. Fasten lid tightly.

Water Painting

Materials

- Backing Paper - you can choose the size you would like to work to
- Variety of mark making items including oil pastels, pastels, pencil crayons, paints, sharpies and inks.
- Brushes, sponges and sandpaper
- Masking tape

This activity can be for a group or one to one activity. To encourage participants to feel free and expressive to make marks, why not use bamboo sticks and attach the mark making items on with masking tape, taping the paper to the floor, so they paint or draw at arm's length.

Instructions

1. Roll out and tape down your length of paper.
2. Present a variety of medium in 'water' colours, such as blues and greens, or the orange of the Bridgewater Canal!
3. Play sounds of water and get the group to respond by drawing the water. You may want to describe the following and make marks that represent them using different implements:
 - Soft / hard water
 - Rough / smooth water
 - Deep / shallow water
4. To conclude, discuss the water painting, and what each member of the group can see. This abstract painting can be used for the background of the Indoor Fishing activity.



