

Activity Ideas- TTS Creative Writing Tubs LI01010



A set of 20 tubs filled with engaging objects to inspire talk and support writing, covering a wide range of topics.

Conveniently contained in a useful display case offering a ready-to-use storage solution for your classroom.

Great for:

- ❖ Promoting communication and language (oracy).
- ❖ Expanding vocabulary.
- ❖ Supporting pupils to organise their thoughts for talking and writing.
- ❖ Inspiring ideas with endless opportunities.

Topics:

1. Under the Sea 2. Jungle 3. Pirates 4. At home 5. Mystery 6. Space 7. Seaside 8. Weather 9. Fantasy 10. Minibeasts
11. Farm 12. Explorer 13. Party 14. People 15. Animals/Pets 16. Places 17. Transport 18. Jobs 19. Food 20. Clothes

Activity Ideas- TTS Creative Writing Tubs LI01010

“Writing (learning) floats on a sea of talk.” James Britton.

These writing prompts provide opportunities to talk about the objects and give that concrete link that is so helpful to many children.

To be able to write effectively, the first and most vital element is to build a rich and varied vocabulary. The tactile and fun nature of this resource is a wonderfully engaging way for children to understand and learn a range of vocabulary from an early age.

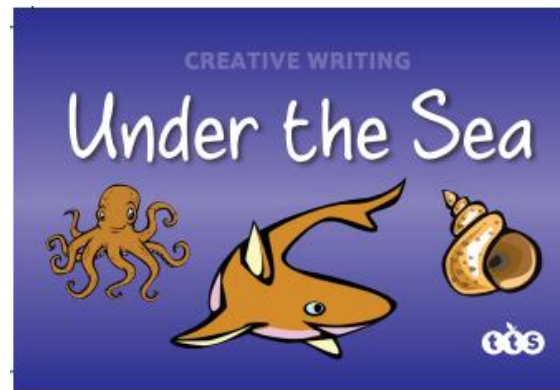
As with all good resources there is more than one way that we can use the creative writing tubs. They can be used individually, or you can combine the contents of the tubs for more complex stories.

Here are a few ideas to get you started. The bullet points on each card are divided into the following four sections: Conversations & Discussions, Fictional Writing, Non-Fiction and Poetry. We hope you enjoy the activities.



Activity Ideas- Under the Sea

Dive into this tub to discover life under the sea and immerse children in a range of underwater creative writing activities.



- Build a bank of descriptive phrases associated with under the sea.
- Talk about friendships by enjoying and sharing books such as 'The Rainbow Fish' by Marcus Pfister.
- Ask sea-themed questions such as 'Are jellyfish made of jelly?' and discuss as a group.
- Talk about and the write a narrative about diving under the sea and describe the incredible things you can see, feel, hear as you explore the deep blue sea.
- Write a story called 'The Lost City Under the Sea', 'The Underwater Adventure', 'The Great Voyage', or 'The Shipwreck'. What other titles can the children think of?
- Build understanding of underwater habitats and write about sea creatures and other marine life. Draw an under the sea scene and add labels and captions to provide information. What would it be like to be one of these sea creatures?
- Create fun rhymes based on rhyming text such as 'Commotion in the Ocean' by Giles Andreae.

Activity Ideas- Jungle

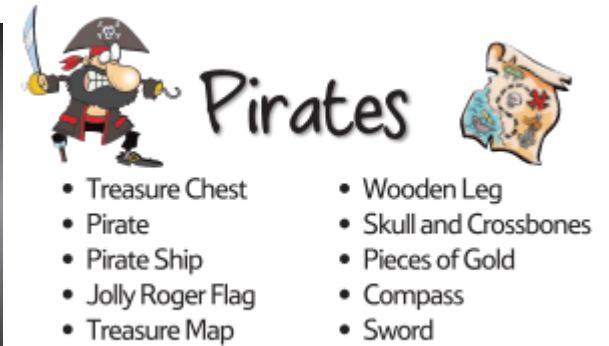
Teach children about jungles and the rainforest and explore this diverse habitat with a range of creative writing activities.



- Talk about a journey through the jungle. This provides a great opportunity to check vocabulary knowledge-not only naming the items, but also by asking lots of relevant questions. A great way of assessing what the children already know before an activity.
- Describe the sights, sounds and smells of the jungle in a vivid piece of descriptive writing to create a sense of atmosphere.
- Embark on a wild adventure into the jungle. Create characters and plan stories about jungle animals.
- Use expanded noun phrases to write about walking through the jungle.
- Create a non-fiction double-page spread about a wild animal or a leaflet about the animals at a zoo.
- Make a fun fact file about each of the items in the tub.
- Write poems or songs about going 'Down in the Jungle'.

Activity Ideas- Pirates

Ahoy, me hearties! Learn about pirates and treasure through a range of creative writing activities.



- Describe a pirate character and use hot seating to ask questions about pirate life.
- Write a pirate diary using the items as prompts to talk about what happened each day on the pirate ship and on Treasure Island.
- Create pirate stories and pirate adventures.
- Make a wanted poster for a fearsome pirate and use the items in the tub to give clues to how to identify them.
- Put the items into alphabetical order and create a pirate dictionary for a new pirate to use.
- Write a 'How to guide' - for example, a 'How to find the hidden treasure.'
- Sing pirate songs and challenge the children to make up their own sea shanties. Can the song contain all the items in the tub?

Activity Ideas- At home

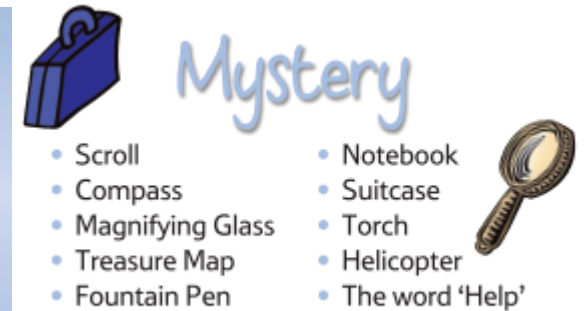
'There is no place like home.' Get children talking about what they are most familiar with- their home and family. A great resource for a Houses and Homes topic.



- Talk about home, family and pets by taking out an item from the tub and allowing pupils to talk about them. Ask and answer questions like, 'What type of home do you live in?' or 'Have you got a garage? What do you keep in it?'
- Say a sentence involving one, two or three of the items. For example, "This **cat** has brown fur." "The **girl** rode her **bike**." "Can the **man** get the **car** into the **garage**?"
- Play 'Kim's Game'. Give children time to look at all the items, then cover them up. Can they remember all ten? Try removing one. Can they guess which one has been taken away? Share strategies with the children such as making up short stories that help them to remember what items were displayed.
- Spark memories of fun times spent with family, friends, a sister or brother. Share stories together.
- Create stories using the items from the tub with the title 'On the way home'. Sort and sequence the objects in the tub into a tangible story plan. The objects could be placed into a writing frame or on a story map to support pupils in recalling all the elements of their story.
- Advertise a house for sale. Describe each of the rooms and try to include all the names of the items from the tub. For example, 'This spacious **house** has a large **garage** for your car and bikes. The garden is secure and ideal for your pet **cat**, **dog** or **child** to play in.'
- Find out about houses around the world and compare the range of homes where people live.

Activity Ideas- Mystery

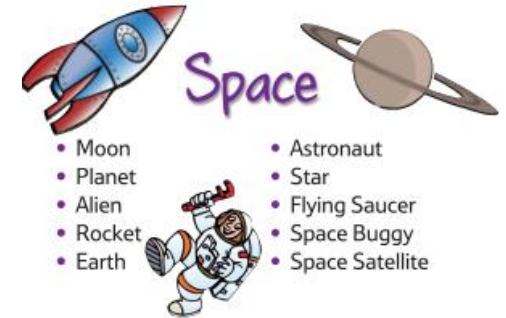
A useful resource for pupils to use to plan their own mysteries with a range of creative writing ideas.



- Pull each item out of the tub individually to generate questions about the clues they have to help solve the mystery.
- Create own mystery stories where a problem needs to be solved. Build up suspense to keep the reader guessing.
- Write exciting adventures based on a quest to solve a mystery.
- Begin with the statement, 'A mystery chest washes up on the shore after a storm.' Write a story about what it is, how and who discovered it and what happens.
- Pull each item out of the tub individually and use each to give ideas for creating a story. For example, the **scroll**- where is it found and what is written on it? The **suitcase**- who does it belong to and what is inside it?
- Use the items to play 'Kim's Game'. Give the children time to look at all the items from the crime scene, cover them up. Can they remember all the items? Or remove one or more of them items. Show the remaining items. What has been taken away?
- Solve and create own riddles to reveal mystery items.

Activity Ideas- Space

What can be found in space? Inspire pupils to write about space and support a Space themed topic.



- Use the items to describe what you might find in space, or on a planet if you were an astronaut landing there. Describe the alien life forms and record the dialogue between you and an alien. Write out some alien words using sounds and decide what each of these words mean.
- Pose questions like 'what would happen if this alien met this spaceman?' Use the other items in the tub to think about where they might go, how they would get there and what they would do there.
- Write a story from an astronaut's perspective, imagining the experiences and emotions they might have as they carry out their mission.
- Invent 'Out of this world' stories using the items in the tub as prompts.
- Make a spaceship directory, putting the items into alphabetical order and writing the uses and descriptions of each one.
- Create an interesting small book of space facts. Use the items in the tub to prompt what to write about.
- Explore poems about space and use the items to create space themed acrostic poems or shape poems.

Activity Ideas- Seaside

'Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside'. Have fun with seaside themed creative writing activities.



- Pull each item out of the tub individually and talk about them. This provides a great opportunity to check vocabulary knowledge- not only naming the items, but also by asking lots of relevant questions. For example, the crab- 'Where do crabs live?', 'Have you ever found a crab on the beach?', or 'How many legs does a crab have?'
- Write a story about the seaside containing the items from the tub. Order the objects to help recall the different elements of the story.
- Write postcards to each other from experiences of a trip to the seaside. Encourage the children to make the postcards and design their own stamps.
- Explore seaside settings and make a map of your seaside town with the items from the tub as features on the map. Draw out different routes on the map that include some of the items and give instructions to someone to find them. You could program a floor robot to follow your route!
- Create alliterative sentences with each item such as, 'Children Chew Clouds of Colourful Crystallised Candyfloss.'

Activity Ideas- Weather

Get children talking and writing about the weather and the seasons. Offer a range of creative writing opportunities.



- 'Let's talk about the weather'. Prepare a weather forecast. Pretend to be a weather presenter and read out your weather report.
- Discuss different types of weather and share which weather we most like or dislike.
- Share and recite poems, rhymes and songs about the weather. For example, 'Who has Seen the Wind' by Christina Rossetti, 'Rain, Rain Go Away', 'I Hear Thunder.'
- Write stories about the weather and the changing seasons. Use adjectives to describe what the weather is like.
- Use different weathers as story starters. For instance, 'The strong wind makes the weathervane spin and objects start to fly around.' A whirlwind might cause things to end up in another place (like in the Wizard of Oz).
- Create a weather report for different types of weather or make a weather dictionary.
- Record experiences of going out in different weather conditions. Think about the clothes you wear to stay dry, keep cool, stay warm.
- Explore and create weather poems. An acrostic poem or kennings poem (riddle) would work well here.
- Collect weather sayings like, 'Red sky at night, shepherds delight...' and make up more of your own.

Activity Ideas- Fantasy

Spark the imagination and create enchanting fantasy pieces of writing.



- Let imaginations run wild with tales of magic, wishes and surprises. Use role-play and rehearse telling stories using the objects from the tubs.
- Retell traditional tales and challenge children to create their own 'Happy ever after' stories. Try writing the story from different character viewpoints.
- Write stories where a character's problem is solved by magic. Use the items from the tub to create a storyboard and support in recalling all the elements of the story.
- Try a chain story where someone picks an item from the tub and creates a sentence about it. For example, 'Once upon a time there lived a handsome **prince**.' The next person picks another item and adds a sentence. 'He lived in a huge **castle** on a hill.' Continue round the group developing the story as you go. See what story you end up with. You could record the story and then get the pupils to write it up afterwards.
- Explore the contents of the tub and ask the pupils to choose their three favourite things. Use these to create ideas for their writing.
- Write ingredients, instructions and sayings for magic spells and potions.
- Create poems and rhymes around a fantasy theme.

Activity Ideas- Minibeasts

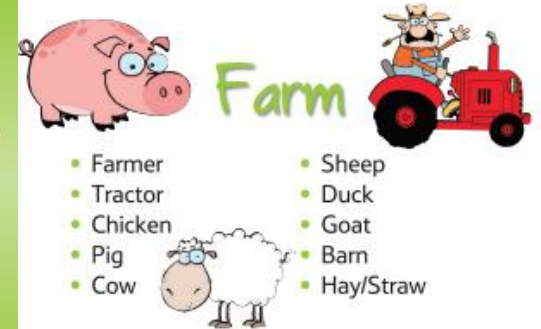
Encourage children to explore natural environments. Look for minibeasts on a hunt and inspire them to record observations. Set the scene by talking and writing about the huge number of minibeasts that live in the world alongside us.



- Use stories like 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle to sequence a story and use story language.
- Use the items as prompts to look for minibeasts when exploring outside. Share observations made and celebrate moments of awe and wonder where children see how beautiful our world is.
- Write enchanted woodland stories and tell the story through the eyes of the minibeast. What would they see, feel, smell, touch, hear?
- Make a minibeast fact finder. Find out how useful minibeasts are.
- Create 'Creepy Crawly Guess Who?' pieces of descriptive writing. Enjoy reading the clues to work out which minibeast is being described.
- Share nursery rhymes and songs about minibeasts and create own versions of them.
- Write insect acrostic poems.

Activity Ideas- Farm

Take a trip to a farm and use these farm-themed resources to encourage pupils to write about their experiences.



- Name items and ask questions. For example, The **cow**. Are cows always this colour? Have you ever seen a real cow? Where do cows live? Why do farmers keep cows? What noise do they make? What do we eat and drink that comes from cows?
- Say a sentence involving one, two or three of the items. “The **pig** is pink.” “The **goat** followed the **tractor**.” “The **farmer** took the **cow** to the red **barn**.”
- Line the animals up to tell a simple story with a repetitive phrase. The child picks up the farmer and walks them in front of each animal in turn. For example, “Good morning, cow. Have you seen my missing hay?” “Moo. I haven’t seen it. It’s not me! But I think I know who it might be...” “Good morning, duck. Have you seen my missing hay?” “Quack. I haven’t seen it. It’s not me! But I think I know who it might be...” (The last animal has the hay behind them) “Good morning, _____. Have you seen my missing hay?” “Here it is! _____” (The animal makes up an excuse or reason they have it).
- Use story starters like **The Farmer and the Giant**_____ (The animals in the tub are not to scale. Imagine a scenario where one of the animals grows much bigger. What problems would there be? Might there be any advantages?) **Moo said the Sheep** (Imagine if the animals swapped voices with each other and confused the poor farmer!) ‘Meow Said the Cow’ by Emma Dodd is a good example to read for inspiration.
- Write labels for each of the objects with captions to go with each one. For example, **horse**. ‘The **horse** eats **hay**.’
- Sing ‘Old McDonald had a Farm’ using the items from the tub.

Activity Ideas- Explorer

Encourage pupils to want to explore and find things out.
Discover some of the most famous explorers in history
and compare the equipment and materials they used.
Role-play being a member of the expedition team.



- Make oral stories using the items in the tub as prompts and introduce new vocabulary.
- Say a sentence involving one of the items and build the story by adding another item to it each time. For example, “The **ranger** went on the expedition.” “The **ranger** went on the expedition to the ancient **cave**.” This is a good memory game.
- Use a story about exploring with repeated parts like ‘We’re Going on a Bear Hunt’ by Michael Rosen. Use the five senses to bring in descriptive language.
- Find out about great explorers such as Christopher Columbus and write a story or diary entry about the explorer.
- Make up a survival kit for an explorer and think about what items they will need to take on their expedition and why each item would be beneficial. Can the children put the objects into an order of importance and discuss the reasoning for their decisions? This could lead to great debating sessions between the pupils.
- Put the items from the tub into alphabetical order and create an Explorer’s Dictionary.
- Solve and create riddles for things that could be seen on the expedition. Alternatively have a selection of riddles about the objects in the tub. Children have to solve the riddle before having access to the object. Who will be the most prepared for the expedition ahead?

Activity Ideas- Party

A child's birthday is a great opportunity to focus on what to consider when planning a party. Inspire writing with party-themed activities.



- Play 'Kim's Game'. Give children time to look at all the items, then cover them up. Can they remember all ten?
- Play 'Mrs Brown went to town, and she bought....' Change it to, '_____had a party and they needed_____'
- Write about experiences of going to a party.
- Use all the senses to describe a party scene. What can you see, hear, smell, touch, taste?
- Make a list of things you need for a party.
- Write instructions for a favourite party game.
- Make up funny alliterative sentences using the items from the tub. For example, 'The clumsy **clown** carries the **cake** with **candles** to the celebration.'
- Create a shape poem based on one of the objects. Discuss which items would make the best shape poem.

Activity Ideas- People

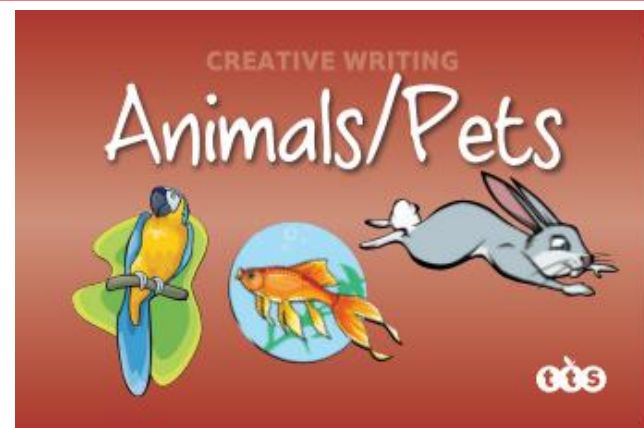
Ideal for when you are learning about people who help us, inspirational people, or famous people in history. Inspire a range of creative writing activities.



- Pull out an item from the tub and use as a prompt. Ask and answer different questions and think of the answers from different character viewpoints.
- Great for discussions about different cultures, ways of life and family dynamics.
- Retell a traditional tale from a different point of view.
- Use descriptive language to describe a person and write a character profile.
- Write a story about travelling the world and the different people you might meet.
- Encourage pupils to write about a personal experience that has been significant to them.
- Describe similarities and differences between people. Think about each other's likes and dislikes.
- Order the items to show life cycles and think about what we can do at different stages in life.
- Choose one of the people from the tub and discuss where in the world they might live. Can they give reasons for their opinions and find the places on a world map.
- Look at poetry and songs from around the world.

Activity Ideas- Animals/Pets

A widely popular topic with young children. Identify and name common animals and enjoy talking about animals they have or would like to have as pets.



- Talk about favourite animals and pets we might have. Describe different animals and expand sentences.
- Use a story like 'Dear Zoo' by Rod Campbell to continue the story. For example, "I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They sent me a _____"
- Can the children think of stories they have read with the animals in the tub included in them?
- Write own animal stories such as, 'How the horse got it's mane?'
- Write about a special bond between a character and an animal.
- Imagine having each of the animals as a pet. What would it be like? How would they care for them? What would you call them?
- Record animal facts.
- Put together instructions on how to look after an animal. Perhaps design an advert for a pet shop or newspaper to advertise a pet for sale.
- Take a selection of animals from the tub and let the children decide which is the odd one out. Children can either write a persuasive argument or present their ideas in a discussion.
- Make up 'Who am I?' poems where the reader has to guess which animal is being described from the clues given on each line of the poem.

Activity Ideas- Places

Explore places and describe and locate different places around a village, town, or city. Encourage talk and writing about special places.



- Discuss 'sense of place' describing what each place is like. What might you see there, hear, touch, smell and taste?
- Encourage pupils to use descriptive language to describe a place.
- Use the items as settings for stories and describe each one for great story starters. For example, 'The old stone house was high up on the hill. It was small in size but could be seen from miles around....'
- Write about the places. Explain who uses them, what they are used for, where they might be located.
- Create a map with different places on it. Give directions to reach a given place and describe its location.
- Write a recount about a visit to one of the places.
- Design a poster to advertise one of the places.
- Choose an item from the tub and collect sounds to make a sound poem for others to guess the place. The poem 'The Sound Collector' by Roger McGough is a good poem to use here for inspiration.

Activity Ideas- Transport

Think about travel and transport and take a journey through history to discover how people have travelled. Enjoy sharing books about cars, lorries, trucks and other vehicles. Excite pupils to create exciting adventures.



- Talk about what mode of transport you would like to use and where you would like to travel to.
- Share the story 'The Hundred Decker Bus,' by Mike Smith and talk about the journey and favourite parts of the story.
- Write a story about travelling to school in different forms of transport.
- Create a story about a magic form of transport that can travel back/forwards in time.
- Instead of having people in a story why not give the main character roles to the different modes of transport found in the tub like in the film Cars.
- Draw vehicles and identify the features with labels and captions.
- Create routes for your car/bike to take and record where you pass and what you see.
- Examine how transport has changed over time and begin to develop a chronology of automobiles, trains and space travel.
- Take an item from the tub and design and write a description about the transport of the future. What would it be like? What would be the same and what would be different?
- Listen to songs and poems about different forms of transport like 'Train and Whistle Blowing' and make up your own transport rhymes.

Activity Ideas- Jobs

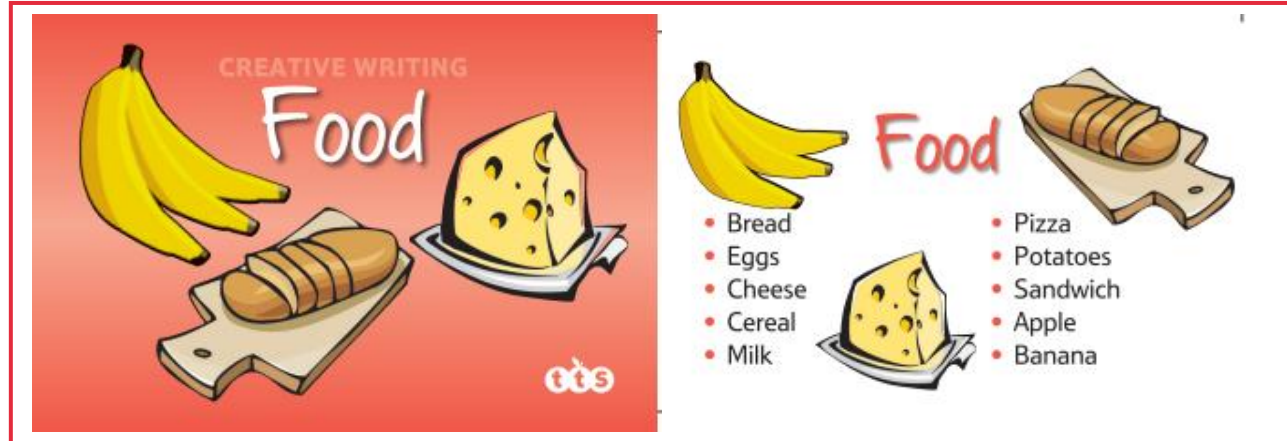
Look at jobs and careers people have and think about the strengths and interests that may be needed to do different types of jobs.



- Model sentences like “When I grow up, I’d like to be a ...” and share ideas about future careers. Why not get the children to research and find the most unusual jobs or the jobs of the future.
- Play ‘Who’s line is it anyway?’ Miming actions for a chosen job and answering questions for others to guess who you are.
- Prepare questions to ask a visitor about their job. What do we want to find out?
- Create wonderful stories about different jobs. ‘A day in the life of....’
- Begin stories, ‘Once upon a time there was a....’
- Write a job advert for a chosen occupation and include facts and information about the job.
- Use the song, ‘I am a music man. I come from down your way, and I can play.’ And change the words. For example, ‘I am a restaurant chef. I come from down your way, and I can cook. What can you cook? I cook an omelette. Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack the egg, crack the egg, crack the egg. Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack the egg, and stir it in the frying pan.’

Activity Ideas- Food

'Food. Glorious food!' Explore food and diets. Inspire a range of creative writing tasks and enjoy creating menus for different meals and occasions.



- Pull each item out of the tub individually and talk about them. Ask and answer questions. For example, **the milk carton**- Which animal does this milk come from? Do we drink milk from other animals? Have you tasted any other types of milk? What is the difference between full fat (blue top) and skimmed (red top) milk?
- Use the items in the tub to write own version of the story 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle. Order the objects to help remember the sequence of your story and to help add illustrations.
- Make a poster about healthy eating and look at an Eatwell Plate showing healthy proportions of different food types. Where do the items in the tub fit in?
- Group the foods in different ways and explain the groups they have been put in. For example, eggs, cereal, pizza can be bought in boxes.
- Write instructions for making a pizza, a favourite sandwich or a recipe that contains some of the items from the tub.
- Make an acrostic poem. For example, **B**rown bread, white bread **R**ye bread too **E**very slice is delicious **A**t least I think so **D**o you?
- Create a '5-a-Day Rap' Starting with, "5 a day, that's what they say. Eat them up, you'll be okay. Good to eat, such a treat. Healthy from your head down to your feet. We will, we will eat you! We will, we will eat you!"

Activity Ideas- Clothes

Calling out to future fashion designers, models, and dress makers. Get creative by discussing various types and styles of clothing. Think about what you might like to wear for different types of weather, occasions and activities.



- Discuss what to pack in your suitcase for different adventures.
- Share traditional tales like 'The Emperors New Clothes' or more modern stories such as 'The Smartest Giant in Town' by Julia Donaldson.
- Write the clothes item names on pieces of paper and spread them about. Can the children put each object with the correct label? (For extra challenge, include one or two words without a match, e.g. swimming costume, kilt, wellington boots, etc)
- Write a story about a character and an item of clothing. The children may want to write about 'The Shoes that Walked Away' or 'The Supersonic Socks'.
- Use the items of clothing in the tub as prompts to write about what a character is wearing. This could be a description needed from a witness to a great bank robbery!
- Become a fashion designer and design different items of clothing based on the items in the tub. Write about the clothes and consider what they are made from and why.
- Make a list of the clothing needed for a special event or occasion such as a guest to a wedding or thinking about a character for World Book Day. Describe the type of shoes or coat to be worn.
- Enjoy poems about items of clothing. For example, 'My shoes are new and squeaky shoes, They're very shiny, creaky shoes...'

Creative Writing Tubs Testimonial

The Early Years Lead/Reception Class teacher from Tottington Primary School reviews TTS Creative Writing Tubs. Here is what she had to say,

“We use our Creative Writing Tubs all the time in reception to get the children’s imagination flowing. They are great because there are lots of boxes that the children have experience of. For example, if they have been to the seaside at the weekend with their parents then we get the seaside box out to talk about what they did. Then they create their stories and add further imagination.

The party box is useful when it has been a child’s birthday, and they can share their experiences of the party and personalise their story.

We recently visited Smiddles Farm, so we used the farm tub for creative writing. They recalled what they saw at the farm and to make our stories more interesting we added the mystery box to get children’s imaginations going.

The children particularly love the fantasy tub with its unicorns and dragons, and this really gets their imaginations running wild.

We use the Creative Writing Tubs in different scenarios and add different characters. There are lots of physical objects in them which is great because it gets the children building the stories into their play. At the start of the year the tubs are great for learning phonics and encouraging pupils to want to write. Children can begin by using them to make up oral stories and you can introduce them to lots of new vocabulary. Throughout the year you can help them to extend their writing and provide opportunities to build stories and use their imaginations.

In the past we may have made the resources ourselves, but this takes time and with so many different resources in each tub children’s thinking can be extended further and they can be more imaginative.”

Mrs Briggs

Many thanks to Mrs Briggs, Tottington Primary School for sharing her thoughts. Watch video here- <https://youtu.be/sDjZYJ7Bxsk>