Review/Case Study 1

Recordable Small World Environment Scape Mats

(EL47856, EL46831, EL46832, EL46833, EL46834)

In this review, Stephanie Cunningham (Mrs C Classroom), shares with us her thoughts on the Recordable Small Environment Scape Mats and some of the ways she has used them with the children in her Reception Class.





"The TTS Recordable Small World Environment Scape Play Mat Bundle has become a favourite in my classroom"

As a Reception teacher, I am always looking for fun resources that help children use their imagination and develop their speaking and listening skills. The TTS Recordable Small World Environment Scape Play Mat Bundle has become a favourite in my classroom.

The bundle includes four mats: **Polar, Woodland, Beach & Sea, and Safari**. Each mat has hidden **recordable buttons** that look like rocks, making small world play even more exciting. What makes these mats special is that the buttons play sounds. Children can hear **environmental noises** such as wind in the trees on the Woodland mat or icy winds on the Polar mat.

The buttons can also be rerecorded with up to **10 seconds of custom audio**, allowing adults and children to add their own sounds and messages.





Here are three examples of how I have used the mats:

1. Child-Led Storytelling

Children use the mats with small world, loose parts, and natural materials during free play. The sounds inspire them to create stories and adventures. They record character voices or animal noises and enjoy sharing their recordings with us and their friends.

2. Understanding of the world

When learning about insects, I recorded clues onto the buttons. For example, on the woodland mat, a button might say, "I have 8 legs and spin webs, and I live here. What am I?" Children listen to the clues and place the correct insect on the mat. This turns learning into a fun, interactive game.

3. Phonics Practice

The mats are also great for phonics. I record sounds or segmented words such as "c-a-t" and "sh-i-p". Children listen, blend the sounds together, and then place an object or toy in the correct area of the mat.

Overall

The mats are well made, durable and highly engaging. They encourage imaginative play, support language development, and can be used across many areas of learning. They have become a valuable and versatile resource in my Reception classroom.





Many thanks to Stephanie Cunningham - Mrs C Classroom for sharing this review with us.

Review/Case Study 2

Recordable Small World Environment Scape Mats

(EL47856, EL46831, EL46832, EL46833, EL46834)

In this review, Marion, the Manager Rockits Sensory shares with us how she used the mat with the children in their setting and explains the different skills developed.





Brief Background:

We used the mat with children aged 2-6 years during our stay and play sessions. We incorporated activities such as craft, songs and stories to support learning opportunities. The features on the interactive mat enabled the activity to be engaging for the ages and stages of all children in the group.

How was the resource used:

With a group of children aged 2 to 4 years, we encouraged turn-taking when using the sound buttons and supported the children to listen carefully to the different sounds produced. This created opportunities to make connections between the sounds and events within the story while developing listening and attention skills. The children remained engaged throughout the activity, showing enthusiasm as they explored the mat and supporting resources.

During a separate activity linked to the story, the older children (aged 5 to 6 years) used the mat to support adult-led sustained shared thinking. The children explored the recording feature and were encouraged to create their own sounds to represent different elements of the story environment, including the pond, grass, river, and mud. They listened carefully, shared ideas, and used their imagination to recreate sounds that matched each area, developing their communication, listening, and creative thinking skills.



Impact and outcomes

The activity promoted communication and language development, social skills, and early comprehension through play-based learning. We found that the interactive mat encouraged children to use descriptive language and narrative skills, helping to reinforce familiar vocabulary while also introducing new words.
Through adult-child interactions, children were supported to recall events from the story, describe characters and settings, and make the connections between sounds and aspects of the story.

We found the interactive mat to be a beneficial resource, particularly when activities were adult-led. Adult support enabled the staff to model how to use the mat effectively, demonstrate the purpose of the different sound buttons, and encourage children to make links between the sounds and the story. This scaffolding supported children's understanding and engagement.

By initially guiding the children through the functions of the mat, this will enable learning opportunities beyond the story activity. The mat can then be successfully incorporated into a variety of small-world play setups, where children can apply their knowledge independently, develop imaginative play scenarios, and continue to build their communication, language, and creative thinking skills. The interactive mat is a valuable addition to any learning environment.







Many thanks to Marion at Rockits Sensory for sharing this review with us.

Review/Case Study 3

Recordable Small World Environment Scape Mats

(EL47856, EL46831, EL46832, EL46833, EL46834)

In this review, Katie Jenkins (continuousprovision_with_katie), a teacher in Early Years, shares with us how she has used the mats to support and develop children's language, oracy skills and storytelling through small world play.





'With such a big focus on oracy and language in EYFS, this is such a clever resource to support these skills independently'

We've been exploring the TTS Recordable Small World Environment Scape Play Mats in our Reception provision, and they've made putting together purposeful small world setups so much easier! I love creating inviting spaces for the children, but finding the time to set everything up can be hard, so having a ready-made starting point has been really useful.

Setting up the mats

The designs give you plenty to work with, and you can add resources you already have in the classroom. A few animals, loose parts, natural materials or number resources are enough to put together a setup linked to what the children are learning. There's no need to spend ages creating a habitat from scratch, and it's easy to change things around to give the same mat a different focus. For example, the woodland mat has been used for Five Little Speckled Frogs, Five Little Ducks, The Gruffalo and We're Going on a Bear Hunt already this half term!

One of my favourite features is the sound. The quality of the different sounds is really good, and they match the habitats so well. They add another dimension to the setups and help bring the environments to life. There's something lovely about having the sounds of the habitat alongside the animals and scenery, with opportunities for children to listen, talk about what they can hear and include it in their play.

Linking the mats to learning in the classroom with the recordable function

Adding your own audio is really straightforward too, and this has been particularly useful for linking the mats to our classroom learning. I added songs or book quotes to match the number rhymes we were learning, including Five Little Ducks and We're Going on a Bear Hunt. It was such a simple way to carry our whole-class learning into provision and give the children the opportunity to revisit familiar songs independently. With such a big focus on oracy and language in EYFS, this is such a clever resource to support these skills independently.

The quality has been another big positive. These have been out in provision for the children to access independently and have withstood everyday classroom use really well. With Reception resources, you need things that can cope with being properly played with, and I've been really pleased with how well they've held up.

For me, the biggest benefit is how easy they are to adapt. Changing a few props and adding a different recording means you can revisit the same resource with a new purpose. They've made setting up quicker, helped link our provision to what we're learning and added something extra through the sound. A lovely, practical addition to our classroom that I can see us using in lots of different ways.

Many thanks to Katie Jenkins for sharing her thoughts with us.