



Star in the Jar - Early Years Education Pack

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From Star in the Jar by Sam Hay.

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Introduction

Dear Early Years Practitioners,

We have designed this pack to support and extend learning around your performance of 'Star in the Jar'.

As preparation for the performance, or to help stimulate further work we encourage you to look at our website where you will find recordings of songs and images; and, of course, Sam Hay and Sarah Massini's beautiful picture book which inspired the play.

We hope that you and the children enjoy seeing the story brought to life.

'Star in the Jar' encompasses themes of friendship, of learning to let go, the relationship between older and younger siblings, dressing up and make believe. The story also provides a wonderful stimulus to learn more about stars and space.

Story telling provides such a vital part of developing language, communication, imaginative and emotional skills.

The activities which follow should be seen as open ended - allowing children to take their learning and play in new directions as they respond to the stimuli of the story.

We hope that this pack provides a useful jumping off point...





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Make a 'Star in the Jar' Story Folder

To encourage parental engagement in this story, prepare a story folder to go home with the children. Parental engagement is likely to mean greater involvement with the story. Learning outcomes for children improve when parents read to and share experiences with their children.

You could include: 'Star in the Jar' book, a torch, glow in the dark stars, a few dressing up items e.g. fairy wand, sheriff's badge.

For children for whom English is their second language, also include translations of key words and messages in the child's home language in the story folder. (This may seem time consuming but is essential for EAL children to connect with the story.) You can find translations on google translate.

Key Messages: Friendship, Understanding, Empathy, Giving and Receiving.

Key Areas of EYFS Learning: Communication and Language; Literacy; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Understanding The World.

Characteristics of Effective Learning: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creative and Critical Thinking.





Create a 'Star in the Jar' Role Play Area

Role play is a huge part of both the original storybook and our production of 'Star in the Jar'. Set up a 'Star in the Jar' role play area to encourage children to immerse themselves in the story world.

By involving the children in setting up the role play area, and listening to their suggestions they are more likely to engage with the activity.

Photograph the area as it develops and children playing within the area.

Resources: A star in a jar, sheriff outfit, fairy outfit, wizard outfit, aprons for school lunchtime staff, a treasure box, torches and bike lights.

The role of the adult is to observe how children engage, noting language, interaction, negotiation, co-operation, sharing, turn-taking and to model emotional coaching and sustained shared thinking to reflect on and develop ideas.

Key Areas of EYFS Learning: Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Understanding The World.

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Create a Space Area

Using black fabric and stick on stars create a space area to read space themed books and sing out of this world action rhymes e.g.

5 little men in a flying saucer, Zoom, zoom, zoom, Twinkle Twinkle...

(see Space Songs sheet)

Some book ideas to get you started:

Moon: Night-Time Around the World by Britta Teckentrup

On the Moon by Anna Milbourne and Benji Davies

Meg on the Moon (Meg and Mog) by Helen Nicoll and Jan Pienkowski

The Way Back Home and How to Catch a Star by Oliver Jeffers

Aliens love Underpants by Clare Freedman

Key Areas of EYFS Learning: Communication and Language; Physical Development; Expressive Arts and Design.

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Space Songs

I'm a Little Rocket (tune: I'm a Little Teapot)

I'm a little rocket pointing at the moon. Ready on the launch pad
We'll be going soon.
Astronauts are boarding
Now I say Blast off! Zoom! We're on our way!

Astronaut Song (tune: If You're Happy and You Know It)

Outer space is where I really like to go.
I ride inside a space ship, don't you know?
I travel to the stars, wave to Jupiter and Mars.
Outer space is where I really like to go.

Climb Aboard the Spaceship (tune: Incy Wincy Spider)

Climb aboard the space ship, we're going to the moon.
Hurry up, get ready, we're going to blast off soon.
Here comes the countdown,
Get ready everyone
let's all count together,
5, 4, 3, 2, 1
BLAST OFF!





'Star in the Jar' - Circle Time

'Star in the Jar' suggests many starting points for activities and stories to create together, as well as themes to discuss, during circle time -

Invent a Story

- ★ Wish upon a star: discuss the idea of wishing on a star. What wish would you make? What would happen if it came true? Might there be some unforeseen consequences?
- ★ A box of treasure: Sam is always looking for treasure. Create a treasure box for found and 'special' everyday objects in the classroom. Pulling out a few objects each time, create a story which uses them all.

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Make a Star Chain

Using a cut out paper or model star, the circle holds hands. The star is passed from person to person, and as it passes the star they make a positive 'wish upon a star' for the person next to them...

e.g. My wish for x is a lovely time at playtime, my wish for x is her favourite food for lunch etc.

The 'wisher' then passes on the star and that person makes a wish for the next child.

What makes a good friend?

'Star in the Jar' is a story about finding a new friend.

The star could be passed around the circle as a way of encouraging each child to connect with this theme. Can everyone in the circle suggest one quality a good friend should have as the star comes to them?

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Finders Keepers

Sam found the star and much as he would have liked to keep it, the star did not belong to him and he had to help him find his way home.

Hide in a bag a selection of things that a child might find and reveal them one at a time; an item of school uniform with a name on, a sweet, a purse, some money, medicine (e.g. paracetamol) - discuss what would be the right thing to do if you found each of these objects.

Finders Keepers is a particular opportunity to discuss Physical Development - Health and self-care, as well as PSE - Self-confidence and self-awareness and Managing feelings and behaviour. The activity also taps into creating and thinking critically.





Expressive Arts and Design

Starry Sky

Use pre cut out star shapes to create a starry classroom 'sky'. Decorate your stars with paint, glitter, foil, sequins etc. and string them up singly or in groups to form mobiles.

Found Treasure

Make a collage picture of found treasure e.g. feathers, crushed foil, shells, pebbles etc.

'Star in a Jar' Snowglobes

Adults – first check none of your jars are leaky! Then use a glue gun plastic stars (e.g. Christmas decorations, glow in the dark stars stuck back-to-back) to the inside of jam jar lids and leave to dry overnight.

Then the jar is filled by the children with:

- Water – $\frac{3}{4}$ full
- Glitter – 1 teaspoon (2 for a very big jar)
- Baby oil or glycerine – a few drops (this is to help the glitter fall more slowly, like snow)

Assistance should be provided with replacing the lids tightly, before the jar is carefully turned upside down.

No leaks? Then it's safe to shake!





Make a 'star scope'

Using a cardboard tube (loo roll, paper towel), an elastic band, and a circle of black paper larger than the end of the tube. Make a pattern of holes in the centre of the black paper, using the pointed end of a pen or pencil. Fix on to one the end of the tube with a rubber band. Shine a torch through the other end to show your very own constellation pattern.

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