

Country Theme

This theme was developed by Janet Hughes and Jill Meredith (Dingwall Library). They can provide more information if required.

The session will probably last about 1 hour, but adjust to meet the needs of the class. You will probably not have time for all the activities listed here, so time them for yourself and decide which you want to do. Janet and Jill suggest dividing the children into groups of 9-10 so that the groups do the activities in rotation. If you are going to do this the activities all need to take about the same amount of time (kitchen timers will help!). You need to decide in advance the running order and who is going to do what.

Set up a display of books and other materials relating to the country – anything that will stimulate feedback. If a different script is used for writing, try to have some samples on display.

Activity 1

Introduction to the library – time spent on this will vary according to how familiar the class is with the library, but could include:

- Red, amber, green – children work in trios
- Show and tell box (5 minutes)
- Feedback / discussion (10 minutes)

Activity 2

Folktale from the culture – some kind of visual aid can be useful e.g. a doll or puppet, an item of clothing, a mask etc

Activity 3

Craft: mask making can be related to a number of cultures, or you could use traditional patterns to decorate a piece of paper or a cut-out shape.

You need to keep the activity reasonably simple, and restrict the time (10-15 minutes) or it will take over the whole session! It helps to have an extra pair of hands to clear up, take art work away to dry etc.

Examples:

China – mask making to go with Chinese New Year. You need:

- A simple cut out to represent the relevant animal
- Coloured pencils / crayons so that the children can decorate it
- Materials the children can use to make ears, whiskers etc as appropriate, and something to stick them on with
- You can get the children to put on the masks and act as the animal, or, if you feel this might get out of hand, put them aside and give them to the children when they are leaving



Australia – use traditional aboriginal patterns to decorate a cardboard boomerang. You need:

- Cut out boomerang shapes
- Examples of aboriginal patterns
- Paints / crayons etc
- If you use paints you need to prepare a space where the artwork can dry

Activity 4 (10 minutes)

“What is it?” picture quiz from the folder. Have the children working in trios or individually. This activity will focus the children’s attention back on the library. Allow about 10 minutes for this

Activity 5 (5-10 minutes)

Language: introduce a few simple words or phrases from the country (e.g. numbers 1-3, hello, goodbye, please, thank you, yes, no) – a flip chart is handy for this.

- Say the words – get them to repeat them
- Ask a question in English that they can answer in the language

Possible extension activities (10-15 minutes) – you need to have a discussion with the teacher beforehand to see what they have already done in class

- If the language uses a different script (e.g. Chinese) – talk about the script and how it works / developed (more information from Janet and Jill if required)
- Let the children try writing the script
- Talk about the materials used – brushes, inks etc

Activity 6

Jokes – question and answer jokes, possibly relating to animals of the country e.g. what do you do if you find a crocodile in your bed? See Activity Village web site:

(<http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/index.htm>)

- Select 8-10 jokes
- Write question and answer on different post-its
- Get the children to match them up

Activity 7 (10-20 minutes)

Music – sing songs related to the country, or introduce musical instruments e.g. for Australia: Waltzing Matilda

- Play / sing the song
- Explain difficult words – use pictures or objects to help
- Introduce appropriate instruments if you have them (e.g. shakers, drums, rain makers, bells, pan pipes, guitar)
- If you feel confident enough, involve the children in making music

Activity 8

Quiz – 10 questions about the country – things they should be able to find out easily from resources in the library. You could get them to use Where’s That Book? or the Quick Guide to Dewey to find the resources, or have the books out ready for them.



Activity 9

Finding pictures – ask the children to find pictures of specific things

- Use non-fiction and reference books
- Show them how to use the photocopier, so that they can make their own copy of the picture
- Possibly introduce use of internet and printer, but this must be supervised

Activity 10

Finishing off

- Ask children and teacher to fill in evaluation /feedback sheets
- Say thank you and goodbye in the language of the country
- Encourage the children to look round the library, collect craft items, borrow books, pick up membership forms

