

Play School

Early Education Notes

SERIES 350 – WONDERFUL WORLD

Background

*“It’s a wonderful world full of wonder
Spinning around and around
There are so many wonderful places to see
A world of adventure that’s waiting for me
A world of adventure that’s waiting for me”*

Come on an amazing voyage of discovery around the world with Play School’s team of intrepid travellers.

In this eye-opening new series, we explore awesome facts about countries near and far, learning about diverse people and cultures and exploring fascinating places along the way.

The beautiful Play School globe allows us a starting place here in Australia from which we travel across the sea to other countries.

Through the Windows, Leon takes us to Egypt, Italy, England, Greece and India to discover fascinating architecture, food, dance, wildlife and landscapes.

Some of the ancient buildings included in this series are still standing after thousands of years! This creates an opportunity to explore structure, shape, building materials and even principals of engineering through construction and play.

Our adventures to other countries and learning about their culture and traditions Through the Windows also links to rich Play School experiences exploring diversity - through language, music, dance and food.



The World Is Big And The World Is Small

(Ella Jenkins)

*Well the world is big and the world is small
So there’s lots of room for the short and the tall
The world is far and the world is wide
There are many different ways to see the other side
You can travel on a boat
You can travel on a plane
You can travel in a dance
You can travel in a game
You can travel on a bus
You can travel on a train
You can travel in a song
Or you can travel in a name.*

Follow up learning experiences

Links to the EYLF

Recognising that ‘diversity contributes to the richness of our society and provides a valid evidence base about ways of knowing’ (EYLF).

Outcome 13 Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities.

Outcome 14 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Outcome 2.1 Children are connected with and contribute to their world. Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.

Outcome 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect.

Outcome 4.2 Children are confident and involved learners, developing a range of skills and processes such as problemsolving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.

Our wonderful world is a big place! The concept of where we are on this incredible planet is mind blowing enough for adults to comprehend. For a young child, exploring their own immediate community can feel vast.

Through this series we open the world up beyond our shores to discover eye-opening landscapes, structures, cultures and traditions that provoke and inspire opportunities for further exploration and discovery.

The wonders of construction



Basing the series around a selection of Wonders of the World, we explore so many different architectural elements and structural shapes in this series – pyramids, tunnels, towers, columns, domes, turrets, and stone circles. Using a variety of materials, including boxes, cardboard tubes, paper, sand, and even fruit and vegetables, we explore elements of construction and engineering - shifting heavy objects, building for stability, incorporating mortar for strength, creating and using a plan, and making shapes with various materials.



A rectangle of paper folded becomes a square building and a piece of tissue paper scrunched and pinched to a point becomes an onion-shaped dome roof. A stack of cut vegetable pieces holds together in a pyramid shape with hummus for mortar.

Michelle and Teo use string and chalk to make a circle for a round rockery garden, and the workers use a tray, ramp and roller system to shift the heavy rocks from one spot to the next.

In a fun twist on a traditional story, 'The Three Little Pugs' find out which building material makes the strongest house to stay up in the wind.

We also explore structures closer to home. Humpty's new box home has a colourful umbrella domed roof and Henny Penny has turrets on her very own 'Cluckington Palace'!

Ideas for extending construction play



- Provide baskets of paper strips. Include different lengths and widths along with pieces of pre-cut tape. Display pictures of different buildings as stimulus for paper construction. Invite children to recreate the shapes we see. Scrunching, rolling, folding and pinching to make different shapes.
- Provide a collection of small boxes, ends taped or glued for stability and longevity to explore balance, size relativity and structure. Can you build something that stays standing? How far can you make it lean before it falls over?
- Stones, sticks, clay and sand provide opportunities to explore and create structure. Can you make a house for a tiny mouse? Or a den for a huge dinosaur?
- For some outdoor building you might use wet sand to create mortar for a rock construction. Or make your own game of skittles using cardboard tubes or milk cartons in the sand. How does the game change when the tubes are buried deeper into the sand?
- Draw simple plans for a building on a large sheet of paper, then use the plan to construct the shape. Create a footprint shape on the ground using chalk or masking tape, then use this to build up. Or in reverse, create a building and then draw the plan. Now challenge someone else to construct it from the plan. Does it look the same?
- Create circles using a point and string with chalk. What effect does the length of string have on the size of the circle?
- Look for different shapes in buildings and other structures around you.
- Use some boxes or a table and some fabric to build a cosy cubby house. Encourage children to bring and add something that's special to them. Have a housewarming dance party.

The wonders of food



This series is opportunity to explore some of the tastes, smells, textures, and colours of foods from around the world.

Teo and Emma make hummus to create a cheese and vege pyramid snack; Kang and Leah use Greek yogurt to make tzatziki and flat bread; Leah combines mango and oat milk with cardamom and coconut yogurt for a delicious mango Lassi; and Kang creates curds and whey to make ricotta using milk and lemon.

The story “What’s For Lunch” leaves Michelle feeling very hungry after opening all the different lunchboxes to find surprises like spanakopita, biryani and raita, felafel and tabouli, noodles with tofu and bok choy, sushi rolls and even a cheese and vegemite roll.

Ideas to try in your kitchen!

Masala

Grind some spices (e.g., coriander seeds) using a mortar and pestle, then use the powder in a recipe. Explore the smell and taste of cinnamon in its bark form and as a powdered spice.

Combine a selection of spices to create your own “masala” (meaning spice mix). Explore the rich smells and vibrant colours as you measure and mix.

- 1 tbsp ground coriander seeds
- 1 ½ tsp cumin
- 1 tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp ground ginger

Store in an airtight container for up to 3 months. Multiply the quantities to make several small jars to share with neighbours and friends.

Delicious eggplant dishes

Explore the interesting colour and textures of eggplant when raw and then cooked. ABC Radio has some great recipes online for Middle Eastern [Baba Ganoush](#) and Greek [Moussaka](#).

Ricotta Pancakes

Did you make ricotta like Kaeng? Use the leftover whey to make pancakes! The time needed to allow the curd to separate from the whey is a lovely opportunity to think of other things we can do while we wait ...

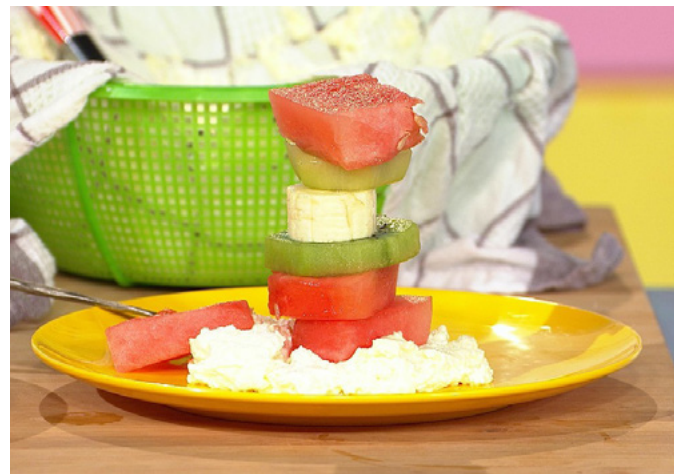
What shall we do while we're waiting waiting?

What shall we do while we wait?

We can clap hands while we're waiting waiting

We can clap hands while we wait

Make patterns on the pancakes with cut fruit and the ricotta and then eat them!



Other ideas

- Use cardamom to make some oaty, crunchy cardamom granola bars. Visit [ABC Radio Recipes](#) for a ‘perfect chewy home-made muesli bar’ recipe.
- Observe the magic of blooming pappadums when they expand and become crunchy when placed in heated oil.
- Educators might encourage children to bring a recipe or photos of food that is special to their family.

The wonders of music and dance



In this series we are so lucky to share the wonderful talents of a variety of musicians playing instruments and musical styles from around the world.

Hamed and Adem introduce us to The Darbuka and the Oud and we learn an echo greeting song in Arabic “Eh-un-lan-weh-seh-un-lan”.

George plays the Bazouki and we learn the steps for Syrtaki or the Dance of Zorba, faster and faster in time with the music.

Devinder and Harmandeep play the dhol and the single stringed tumbi. Together with Leah dressed in traditional costume, we learn a Punjabi folk dance of celebration called Bhangra, including the joyous hop and finger-pointing part of the dance called Dhamal.



Extension ideas

- Try the Dance of Zorba in a circle. Introduce percussion instruments to explore the change in tempo in a different way.
- Learn some words of greeting or simple songs in other languages.
- Encourage children to share favourite family songs or music. A digital recording of a family member singing can provide opportunity for the child to help their friends learn the song together.

Recorded world music suggestions

(Look up titles online to find out how to access)

- Multicultural Children’s Songs by Ella Jenkins
- World Travels: World Songs for Kids
- Putamayo World Music

Through the Windows



“Welcome to Leon’s Wonderful World ... no need to get on a plane. We’ll take you there now”.

Watch each film again in ABC Kids Early Education’s [Family, Community and Culture](#) curriculum area.

Leon guides us through each windows episode to take us to new places beyond our own, across the sea. Each episode takes us to a different country where we see a rich snapshot of culture, architecture and landscape.



1. Extraordinary Egypt

We see the giant Pyramids set in their sandy desert surrounds, including the biggest in the world, The Great Pyramid of Giza, and Great Sphinx of half-lion half-man Sphinx. Each pyramid is made from millions of stone blocks.

Built thousands of years ago, we marvel at their great size, and explore the tunnels, secret passageways and hidden chambers underneath.

We also visit the busy markets where we see baskets of colourful spices, musicians and swirling dancers in traditional dress.



2. Incredible Italy

Home of spaghetti, pizza and gelato, and also home to the famous building, The Leaning Tower of Pisa. Built as a bell tower, it stands 8 levels high. After the first two levels were built the heavy marble began to sink into the soft ground the tower took over 200 years to finish. Today engineers have made sure that the tower is safe and won’t fall over. Visitors can walk all way up the winding stone stairs to see the wonderful view across the roofs of Pisa from the top of the tower.



3. Exciting England

We see some very old buildings in London, including Big Ben, Tower Bridge and Buckingham Palace.

And out in the countryside we visit Stonehenge, the most famous stone circle built over 5000 years ago and older than the Egyptian pyramids. Some of the stones in Stonehenge weigh and much as 4 elephants. There were no trucks or cranes when Stonehenge was built – how were the stones carried from as far away as Wales? We also see some English wildlife including sheep, hares, badgers and a deer with enormous antlers.



4. Glorious Greece

Home of delicious Greek salad, tzatziki and moussaka. We see people doing Greek dancing, some in traditional dress. We visit the capital city of Athens, one of the oldest cities in the world, where we find the Parthenon. Built mainly of marble over 2400 years ago, the Parthenon stands on the rocky Acropolis high above the city. We look at the columns and see stone sculptures which tell a story. We also look at the stone amphitheatre built into the hillside, where people would come to see performances.



5. Iconic India

We hear traditional Indian music as we see cows and people in the streets, and delicious food being cooked in the busy markets – samosas, pappadums and sweet jalebi. We explore the brilliant colours and movement of the festival of Holi. We see amazing old stone buildings, including the Golden Temple, surrounded by water and coated with real gold. And we visit the Taj Mahal, built almost 400 years ago from marble and decorated with gemstones and special writing. One of the 7 wonders of the world.

More ideas

Make a passport and add “stamps” for those countries as you explore aspects of food, music, culture and architecture.

Keep an eye out for cultural festivals in your community

Make a family tree with photos of family members.

Picture book suggestions

“No Place Like Home” (2018) by Ronojoy Ghosh

“Whoever You Are” (2006) by Mem Fox and Leslie Staub

“Let’s Eat” (1996) by Ana Zamorano

“Ben and Gran and the Whole, Wide, Wonderful World” (2004) by Gillian Shields and Katherine McEwen

“See Inside Famous Buildings” (2009) by Rob Lloyd Jones and Barry Ablett

“Home” (2016) by Carson Ellis

Recommend reference book

Teoh, A (2020) Lessons in Cultural Competence: 5 ways to embrace cultural diversity in your service. Community Early Learning Australia (CELA).

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