

Content of the story sack „Peter in the Woods“

Books:

- Story book: “Peter in the woods”
- Fact book: “Animals”

Artefacts:

- Soft toy: trow
- 4 checklists and white board marker
- 1 magnifying glass (not yet implemented)

Activity materials:

- CD “In the hall of the mountain king”
- Bag with drift wood, pine cones, stones, sticks, lichen
- 40 two cent coins
- 33 green name cards of the animals and plants mentioned in the book+ felt bag
- 24 blue cards with names and pictures of animals and plants mentioned the book+ woollen bag
- 33 white cards with names and photos of the animals and plants mentioned in the book+ satin bag
- Animal figures (not implemented yet) + leather bag
- Large wooden dice
- 4 felt player token
- Brown cloth

Others:

- Parent guide with idea cards and extended information
- Blue tack

Peter in the woods- parents prompt

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About the story sack

As a music teacher that regularly holds music lessons in nursery settings I have used the music of “In the hall of the mountain King” by Edvard Grieg before. The children loved the thrill of the story and to invent their own trows. So I decided to turn this story into a book as well and was lucky to find an illustrator that supported me with this project. I created Peter as the same strange young child that I have been: with an interest in animals that was a little bit more than usual, always taking my animal and plants book with me. Maybe I can arouse some of this enthusiasm for nature in other children. I hope you and your child/ren enjoy the story and have fun.

Health and safety warning

- This is not a toy. Do not leave children under three play with it without supervision.
- Make sure your child washes his hands after playing with the stones and wood.
- The story might scare your child a little bit. Give him the chance to sit on your lap and provide a loving and secure atmosphere. But do not be too worried. After my experience they enjoy the thrill of a scary story.

Alternative introduction of the story

- Use the wood, bark, moss and stones to build caves for the animals
- Use the pre-reading questions that do not link to the book to engage your child in the activity
- Put on the CD, listen to the music and tell the following story:
Once there was a little boy/girl that went on a little walk into the woods. He wanted to discover animals and plants. It was a sunny and nice day. There he saw a butterfly and there he saw a bunny hopping by. What else might he have discovered on such a beautiful day? (Keep describing a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere until the music starts getting faster and threatening) But suddenly he heard a strange noise and saw something moving in the shrubs. He felt a bit scared. What might it have been. And his heart started to beat faster. And he heard another strange noise. So he decided to walk a little bit faster, hoping to reach the end of the wood soon. (Keep describing an atmosphere that’s getting more and more threatening and how the child feels more and more scared until you hear a sudden change in the music- it gets louder and faster.) Suddenly he saw some horrible creatures. They jumped out of the shrubs and behind the trees and chased him through the wood, so he ran as fast as he could. (Describe how the child runs away from the trows until you hear loud beats). But then he reached the end of the wood. And when the first creature stood in the sunlight it suddenly turned into stone. And the king of the trows he was angry and stomped and stomped, because the child escaped.
- Don’t worry- you cannot miss the important parts in the music and do not need to have any musical experience.
- Use other reading questions of the activity card that fit to this story line.

Idea Card

Take your time to discover all the things hidden in the story sack. You don't need to ask all the questions, when reading the book. Just enough to keep your child engaged, not so many that the story loses its flow.

There are lots of questions you and your child might have about the story. There are however no right or wrong answers to most of them. Having a little discussion about these open ended questions can be fun and encourages creative thinking.

Comprehension and extended thinking questions

Pre-reading

What animals do live in the wood? What do they look like/eat? Where do they sleep?

What plants grow there? What do they look like?

Would you go into a wood on your own?

What would you take to a trip in the wood?

Do you think a forest can be dangerous? Why (not)?

Just by seeing the book cover and knowing the title: What do you think the book is about?

During reading

Why does Peter like to tick his list?

Why do the other children laugh? Do you think this is kind? What else could they do?

Why does he need a pair of spare pants?

Ask your child to find/count different animals and plants on the pictures.

Why does the rabbit wear sunglasses?

Why does Peter feel scared?

What kind of scary sounds might you hear in a wood?

Why do the trows want to catch Peter?

Why do they turn into stone in the sun?

After reading

What else could Peter have done when the trows tried to catch him?

What do you know about trows? What do they look like? Where do they live? What do they eat?

Illustrations

Stick some of the photos or drawing of animals and plants with blue tack on the checklist. Look through the book and tick everything you found on your list.

Games

Games teach new skills and expand children's vocabulary. When you play the game, remember to:

- Read the directions
- Teach your child that it is okay to lose
- Talk as you play
- Play often
- Relate the game to the story
- Have fun

You might use the resources in the story sack, to play the following games:

1. Pairs/ Concentration/ Memory

Material: Two card sets. For the easier variant use the photos (white) and the drawings (blue) for a harder variant use one picture set and the word cards.

Setup: Shuffle the cards and lay them on the table, face down, in a pattern (e.g. 4 cards x 13 cards).

Gameplay: The youngest player goes first. Play then proceeds clockwise. On each turn, a player turns over two cards (one at a time) and keeps them if they match. If they successfully match a pair, that player also gets to take another turn. When a player turns over two cards that do not match, those cards are turned face down again and it becomes the next player's turn. Players keep each pair they find. At the end of the game, each pair scores one point. When all the pairs have been found, the player with the most points wins.

2. Ticking the boxes

Material: A checklist and a whiteboard marker for each player and two card sets (white+blue= easy game, green+another set=harder).

Setup: Shuffle one of the sets and share the cards among the player. Stick them with blue tack on your list.

Gameplay

Variant 1: Look through the book and try to find the words or pictures from your list.

Variant 2: Shuffle the second set of cards and lay them face down on the table. The first player turns one card. If its pair is on his list he can make a tick beside the card on his list. Then the next player gets a turn. The winner is the person that got a tick behind all his cards first.

This game might be easier than pairs for younger children, as they only have to remember the position of one card.

3. Peter in the woods- board game

Material: dice, 2 penny coins, player token, 2 card sets (picture cards= easy, word+ picture set= hard) (you might replace the cards that are going to be placed on the table through animal figures if you like), checklists, blue tack, whiteboard marker, brown cloth, stones, sticks and other materials

Setup: Lay the brown cloth on the table. Ask your child to help you to create a deep dark wood. You might build dens for the animals to hide in. Lay a trace through your forest with the coins. They will be your way markers as the bread crumbs in Hansel and Gretel. Share one set of cards or the animal figures in the wood. It should be clear to which coin they are allocated. Not every coin needs to get an animal.

Your board might look like this:



Shuffle one of the sets and share the cards among the player. Stick them with blue tack on your list. Choose a starting position for your token. It should be on a coin, near the edge of the board.

Gameplay: The first player rolls the dice. He can move his token in each direction along the coin tracks the number of coins indicated by the dice. Then the next player gets a turn. If a player reaches one of the animals on his checklist, he needs to stop his turn there to “observe” it. He can then tick it on his checklist. Winner is who managed to tick all the animals on his list first.

Variant: If a player rolls a 6 the a trow comes out of his hiding and chases him back to the end of the wood (his starting point).

4. I spy

Material: Stones, sticks, bark, lichens ect.; animal figures or cards; brown cloth

Setup: Lay down the brown cloth on the table. It will indicate your board. Set up a forest with dens and huts made from the stones, wood and plants. Hide some animal figures or cards in the forest.

Gameplay

Variant 1: Make your child look at the table and memorize the animals. Make it then close his eyes or turn round, so it cannot see the table. Hide one or more of the animals. Your child is then allowed to look at the table again and should guess which animal is missing. You might take turns in hiding and remembering the animals. You could use a hangman to indicate wrong guesses and find out a winner if you like.

Variant 2: Say I spy with my little eye... and name a character of one of the animals. Your child should try to find this animal. You might take turns in describing and guessing.

Variant 3: Let your child make up a checklist with the animals it would like to find. Hide them in your room and let your child seek them.

Extended learning activities

1. Make a trip to the wood
There you might:
 - Collect stones, sticks, wood, bark, leeches, moss to build your own forest or for art activities
 - Look for and take pictures of trows (faces you might see in wood or stones) and their dens
 - Take a plant book and identify plants you find on your way
2. Prepare and make a trip to the zoo/wildlife park
 - Make a list of the animals your child would like to see
 - Ask about the information your child would like to find out (size, food, living area)
 - Take pictures of the animals and collect information to make your own animal book when you are back home
3. Create trows
 - From sticks, stones and other material, you could also draw them
 - Use wobbly eyes if you like
 - Take pictures
 - Measure them, invent a name and their favourite food and make your own trow book
4. Listen to the music of Peer Gynt
You find a description of the story the music tells in the part "alternative introduction." It tells a similar story like the book.
5. You might act out the story to the music as a music drama.
6. Make troll masks from cardboard plates
7. Make your own magnifying glass (you can find an instruction on the next page)
8. Make your own animal puppets from plasticine or card (instruction on the next page)

How to make your own magnifying glass

All you need is...

- A clear plastic bottle
- A dry marker pen
- A pair of scissors
- Water



How to make...

1. Draw a circle shape at the neck of the bottle. It needs to be here so you create a disc shape when you cut it out.



2. Cut out the circle
3. Pour a little water into the disc.
4. Hold it over your book or paper to make the letters bigger. It really works so well!



The science bit.

The disc shape you have cut out curves outwards, so is a convex shape. By adding the water the light that passes through is refracted meaning that it is bent inwards, creating a lens effect and enlarging the size of the letters. So you have then created your very own **magnifying glass!**

Source: <http://www.science-sparks.com/2012/05/21/make-your-own-magnifying-glass/>

How to make animal puppets from felt and cork



Rabbits



Hedgehog

Woodpecker and crow

Deer



squirrel

owl



Fox



Patterns can be found here:

<http://www.wunderbare-enkel.de/tiere-basteln/1292/waldtiere-im-winterwald>



About trows

Information

In this book I used the word “trows” for creatures that are wood, sticks, stones and leeches that came to life. They turn back into stone and wood when they come into contact with sunlight.

Other trows are creatures that are mainly known on the Shetland and Orkney Islands of Scotland. They are small creatures, comparable to the Scandinavian Trolls. It is said that they come out of their “Trowie Knowes” (their dens) to go into the houses of humans to steal food. As they love music, they sometimes kidnap musicians that come home late at night. (Source: <http://www.orkneyjar.com>)

Stories

Here is another Trow story:

Some trows [trolls, fairies] asked a fiddler to play at a wedding and took him away in a strange boat. As they rowed the trows said, "Trooly mooly o da warp." Each stroke of the oars took them three miles and in no time they were in Norway. It was a very pleasant company and the fiddler played all night then turned down the trows when they offered to take him home. When he was ready to go home, they said he would have to give them something for taking him, so he promised them a young cow.

They returned singing, "Trooly mooly o da warp," at every stroke. When he got home he discovered he'd been lost and given up for dead; it was three years since he had left. But he couldn't explain where he'd been. He was so annoyed he decided not to give the cow. But when he looked at the cows there was one sickly animal that neither ate or drank, and he realised that it was only the shape of the cow that was left: the trows had taken the real animal.

(source: <http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/71713/5;jsessionid=5C8D5A0C56D17F3EAF3F117E0B686B4>)

Another one can be heard here:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandsstories/mallieandthetrow/index.asp>

Music

The Band “Hom Bru” wrote a song called “Da Trowie Reel” that most children love.

Edvard Grieg tells in his “Peer Gynt Suite” the story about a young lad called Peter that has many adventures. “In the hall of the mountain” is the piece that tells how he is chased by trows but eventually manages to escape. “Morning voices” is an other famous piece of that cycles.

Another classical piece about troll like creatures is Modest Mussorgsky’s “Gnomus.”

Classical music for free can be found here: <https://musopen.org/>