

Junk Modelling

Learning objectives:

To help children learn that materials can be reused in lots of creative ways, to make, play, and learn, instead of just being thrown away or recycled.



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Practitioner knowledge

Recycling is helpful but it's not the only solution. Recycling uses energy and resources to collect, process, and transport the materials.

It's important to remember not everything can be recycled; some things can only be recycled a limited number of times before the quality reduces, and unfortunately much of what goes into recycling bins can sometimes be contaminated.

A more effective approach is to first look at reducing, reusing and repairing as much as we can; this helps to reduce waste, save natural resources and use less energy, all better for the planet!



Activity overview:

Junk modelling is a great way to introduce ideas like reusing and caring for things. Children will explore, be creative, express themselves and have fun using everyday materials that would have otherwise been wasted or recycled.

It allows them to:

- Explore and create using a variety of materials.
- Develop fine motor skills (cutting, sticking, building).
- Use imagination and creativity.
- Begin to understand reusing materials.





Activity:

Collect various everyday items such as cereal boxes, yoghurt pots, and milk bottles.

Ask the children what would have happened to these had we not saved them. Explain that instead of throwing them away, we are going to turn these materials into something new.

Let the children explore and choose items, asking them what they want to make.

It's all about imagination here; there are no right or wrong answers! If the children are struggling to come up with ideas, you could stick some inspiration photos close by.



Modelling ideas:

- Box houses
- Bottle cars
- Junk animals
- Tube rockets
- Musical instruments
- Mini village / town / city
- Mystery junk box



▶ Finish and linking to 'Reduce and Reuse' -

Once the children have finished their craft, encourage them to make up stories, characters, or settings to go with their creations.

Ask them why saving and re-using these items is better than throwing them away, for example, by saving them we have less waste and used less energy.

Together you could also think about other items that might be wasted or recycled that could be made into something new for you all to use in the setting!



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