

Halloween

Using poetry as a stimulus for
Visual Arts activities

SPOOKY CORNER **Infants**

Explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures – make imaginative structures

Create a spooky corner in the classroom, perhaps inspired by a letter from a friendly witch who asks to stay for a while in a special part of your room. Make a dark enclosed area (using dark coloured paper or try to 'black out' the home corner or Wendy house. Suspend imaginary creatures from the roof – 3d models made from card, stuffed paper bags, fabric and fibre, or tissue paper collages. Put soft cushions on the floor (covered with black fabric that might be decorated with invented stitchery or print), arrange a few notes from the witch (who visits at night of course) inviting the children to use her home during the day – and leave the rest to the children's imagination! This is wonderful for construction work in a variety of forms.

KEY MESSAGE

It is unfortunate that seasonal and festive occasions often lead to the production of mere replicas rather than to visual arts.

SKELETON PARADE

Experiment with a range of drawing/paint and colour materials. (All classes)

Use white chalk/pastel or white paint on various coloured papers to make drawings about skeletons.

Use a variety of print making techniques to make theme based prints – print using stencils. (1st and 2nd classes)

Make a stencil of a skull and print onto large sheets of paper using printing inks, sponges, sprays or stencil brushes to create Halloween wrapping paper – or print onto cards to make Halloween greetings.

Make simple clay pots (3rd and 4th classes)

Use clay to make a pinch pot or a coil built pot. Use slip to add clay shapes to your pot and cut shapes from the sides of your pot to turn it into a lantern for a skeleton. Decorate your pot with colour or incised decorations (or turn it into a witch's cauldron).

Make small inventive pieces in fabric and fibre – design a collage or appliqué piece on an imaginative theme

Use white fibres to create an image of skeletons on a dark fabric background.

The skeletons are out tonight
They march about the street
With bony bodies, bony heads
And bony hands and feet
Bony, bony, bony bones
With nothing in between
Up and down and all around
They march on Halloween

Jack Prelutsky

Use this poem as a sound poem

Beating the rhythm as you say it using untuned percussion instruments that make a clacking sound. Listen to Fossils from The Carnival of the Animals by Saint Saens.

CLEVER CAULDRON

Make your own cauldron by covering a bucket or a wastepaper basket. Ask the children to write out spells on shapes cut from a variety of coloured papers. These spells might form the basis of a game or movement session eg Hiss and Hop, Till I say Stop/Frogs legs will make you jump, turn into a... etc

FAT OLD WITCH

(1st and 2nd classes)

The strangest sight I've ever seen
Was a fat old witch in a flying machine.

The witch flew high,
The witch flew low,



The witch flew fast, the witch flew slow,
The witch flew up, the witch flew down.
She circled all around the town.
Then turning left, and turning right,
She disappeared into the night.

That fat old witch in a flying machine

Is the strangest sight I've ever seen.
Of course it happened... on Halloween.

Leland Jacobs

Explore shape as seen in natural and manufactured objects and become aware of the shape of shadows cast by objects

Work in pairs or cooperative groups to create large cameos of witch figures for decorating windows/walls, etc. Dress one member of a group up as a witch, use a strong light source (O/H projector) to create a shadow on large sheet of paper. Draw around the shadow and cut out the resulting shapes.

Use colour expressively to interpret themes based on imaginative life

Make a painting about the witch on her strange flying machine. Discuss beforehand what such a machine might look like – what might it be made up from – practice drawing it beforehand if you wish.

Use a variety of print making techniques

Find some examples of Halloween clip art on a CD or on the internet, print them out and cut them out. Create exploded designs by cutting these images up and assembling and sticking them on a background page in unusual ways.

Make sturdy clay figures based on poems

Join two thumb pots together using slip, to create the base shape for a model of the fat old witch in the poem. Add other pieces of clay to the shape using scoring and slip technique to create the witch.

Design an imaginative structure e.g. a miniature theatre set

In co-operative groups construct a spooky scene inside a box using a variety of materials.

Invent a costume

Have a witches' party in class. Design and make a witch costume at home (no commercial ones allowed) using old clothes or scraps of fabric. A homework project in visual arts.

HALLOWEEN MAGIC MENU

3rd and 4th classes

Live lizard, dead lizard,
Marinated, fried.
Poached lizard, pickled lizard
Salty lizard hide.

Hot lizard, cold lizard
Lizard over ice.
Baked lizard, boiled lizard
Lizard served with spice.

Sweet lizard, sour lizard
Smoked lizard heart.
Leg of lizard, loin of lizard
LIZARD A LA CARTE!

Sonja Nikolay

Look at and respond to drawings by artists

Look at collections of menus and how they are decorated by artists – particularly at borders. Pretend that you run a café for witches, ghouls, goblins, etc. Make up the menu for your establishment, write it out using a chosen calligraphy style (or a font chosen from your word processing programme) and decorate it with chosen motifs and border designs using a variety of drawing materials.

Discover texture in natural and manufactured objects

Look at the line in the poem – 'Salty lizard hide'. What do you imagine this hide would look/feel like? Cut out some lizard shapes from paper, place them on various surfaces and rub them over with wax/oil crayons in various colours. If you wish wash over them with diluted inks. Assemble your textured lizards into a colourful collage.

Compose relief print blocks and use them to print designs.

Draw a lizard motif onto a small block of wood and glue string onto your drawing. Ink up your block using a roller and printing ink and print a repeat pattern on a large sheet of paper – if you wish stick small pieces of variously coloured papers in a pattern onto your large sheet before printing – and print onto these.

Make sturdy figures in clay

Look at various pictures of

lizards and try to create a model of one. Decorate your lizard figure with incised decoration trying to create the scaly effect of reptile skin – make models of similar creatures.

Design papier-maché forms and structures

Imagine what a witch might have for dinner – make models of the various components, paint/colour them and assemble them on a plate. Work in cooperative groups.

Make soft toys emphasising individuality and variety

Imagine that you are a designer for a toy company. The lizard is the next big thing that is going to hit the shelves in toy shops. Invent a lizard soft toy by cutting out two lizard shapes and sewing them together and stuffing the... Decorate with appropriate materials such as buttons for eyes, etc.

WITCHES' SPELLS

(5th and 6th classes)

The sky is dark,
the stars are bright
The moon is shining too,
Inside a cave the witches meet
To mix their favourite brew.

They light a fire, and when it
flames
They fetch a big black pot;
They fill it up with lizard's blood
Then wait until it's hot.

Each one has brought a magic
charm
To put into the stew,
A spider's web, a fairy's wing,
A beetle's leg or two.

They take a stick, and bending low
They stir the mixture round,
Then rub their fingers, old and
cramped,
And stamp upon the ground.

Their wizened faces grin with glee
As round the pot they prance.

Their sharp eyes glisten in the dark,
their cloaks swirl as they dance.

They drink, and then into the sky,
On broomsticks swift and light,
They cackle hoarsely as they fly.
And soon are out of sight.

A Nightingale

Draw imaginative themes using inventive pattern and detail

Look at the line in the poem that describes the witches' faces as being 'wizened'. What does this mean? Collect pictures of older faces which show lots of lines and wrinkles on them. Use pencil and charcoal to draw an imagined witch face.

Paint from observation – groups of figures in a particular setting

The poem describes the witches dancing around the cauldron – ask a group of children to model this action for you. Take

a quick sketch or photo of the group and use it as a basis for a painting of the witches dancing around the cauldron.

Make prints for functional uses – posters

Use a computer programme to design a poster for a Halloween party/dance in your school. Use basic draw and paint programmes to create your own images for printing, rather than using clipart.

Experiment with low relief

Make a slab of clay. Create the scene of the witches dancing around the cauldron by adding layers of clay to the slab. Decorate the plaque you create

using colour.

Make imaginative structures – wire structures

Build a framework for a witch figure in wire – imagine her with arms outstretched as she casts a spell. Complete your figure by covering it with plaster bandaging in layers. Add fabrics and fibres to clothe the figure. Work in cooperative groups on this.

Make small inventive pieces – a collage or appliqué piece

Create a magic cloak by sewing magic symbols cut from shiny fabrics onto a plain backcloth – add detail with fabric crayons and paints or other colour materials.