

Quiet Creative Space

Alien Ecosystems: invent what grows on an alien planet, and how the species there depend on one another.

What it is

A child invents an alien species, then works out what it needs from the others around it. Cut and stuck card, tissue paper and sticks.

Two routes. Both can run. Follow whichever the child in front of you wants.

One shared installation

Everyone adds a species to the same piece. The species co-exist on it, so it grows through the day.

Mini worlds

One world per child, built inside a shoe-box lid like a paper theatre. Elements stand at different depths.

Explore

Talk first, make second. The question is not what an alien looks like, it is what it lives on.

YOU CAN SAY

What would be growing on your planet? What does it look like?

YOU CAN SAY

What does it need from the others to grow?

- who feeds it
- who cleans up after it

- who it shelters
- who carries its seeds

YOU CAN SAY

Things on Earth do that for each other too. Would it work the same way in space?

Make

EXAMPLES

Reference photographs

Alien and earth ecosystems and landscapes, on the table to look at. They are what the talking starts from.

TECHNIQUES

Cut and stick card

Thin coloured card, cut to shape and drawn on with pens. Glue stick to join, masking tape where it needs to hold.

Tissue and sticks

Tissue paper for anything soft, frilled or see-through. Sticks to hold a shape up off the surface.

Paper theatre

For a mini world. Stand pieces at different depths inside the lid, nearest at the front, so it reads as a scene rather than a flat collage.

No PVA at this station. Glue stick only.

STEPS

1

Think what grows on the planet. Not a creature yet, a thing that lives there.

2

Decide what it looks like.

3

Work out what it does for the others, and what they do for it.

4

Make it, from card, tissue paper and sticks.

5

Add it to the shared installation, or build it into a mini world in a shoe-box lid.

Setup

MATERIALS

On the table

- thin coloured card
- scissors
- glue stick
- pens
- masking tape
- shoe-box lids

Helen brings these

- tissue paper
- sticks

Print

- reference photographs

Soft floor

- cushions
- foam mats, 50x50cm

SETUP

Clear the room first. The job is taking things out to open the space, not bringing more in.

Then mark the areas out with masking tape on the floor.

RESET BETWEEN CHILDREN

Offcuts cleared, scissors back in the pot, lids stacked.

The shared installation is not cleared. It is the one thing here that accumulates.

Safety

On the table: scissors, glue stick, pens, masking tape, thin coloured card, tissue paper, sticks, shoe-box lids.

Children	
Adults	
First aid	

Notes

- **Which route runs is not decided.** Shared installation, mini worlds, or both. It changes whether shoe-box lids are needed.
- **The floor is not settled.** Two cushions, no bean bags, twenty foam mats that could come. The Mosque has been asked whether it has anything soft to use.
- **The reference photographs still have to be printed.**