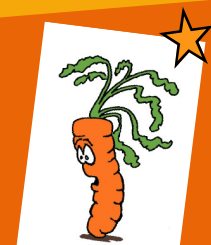




October Theme Skills & Abilities



In Pumpkin Feels Lonely, children learn that different types of vegetables have different attributes. Pumpkin feels inadequate until he realises that he too has a special skill - rolling.

This is a good opportunity to support young children to think about their own strengths. Instead of focussing on the things they can't do and comparing themselves unfavourably with friends, they can discover and celebrate the things they can do well.

Try the activities below or some of your own, and check out the web links too.

Activity One: Silly Skills Olympics

This activity allows the children to attempt a selection of different skills and to see that no-one can do everything brilliantly and that everyone is good at something. Choose a list of activities which will suit the children you work with. Try to ensure that every child gets to do something which you know they can do well, so everyone gets to shine and achieve. Also include some things which some people cannot do, like tongue curling. Try to avoid activities where there is a winner and loser like racing as the focus here is about experimenting and discovering what your body can do. Encourage children to have a try and to help each other if needed. Some examples of activities you could include (but please add your own) are given here - some may need altering according to the age of your kids:

- hopping on one leg
- curling your tongue
- counting backwards from 10
- holding (or carrying for older kids) a beanbag or balloon between the knees
- doing a roly poly
- spell your name
- whistling
- drawing a circle (or writing your name) with your left and then right hand
- hula hooping
- catching a large ball
- winking
- throwing a beanbag into a bucket
- click your fingers

Activity Two: Animal Skills Bingo

For this activity you will need a few books about wild and domestic animals or a good animal TV show. Print off the bingo cards given here or alter to suit your materials. Each child gets a bingo card, or children can work in pairs. Children have to leaf through the books or watch the TV show to find animals which can do the skills given on their grid. When they find an animal which can do that skill, they should cross the skill out, as in bingo. Keep going until someone has completed their grid, or until everyone has finished.

Activity Three: Make A Strongbox

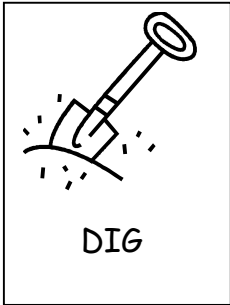
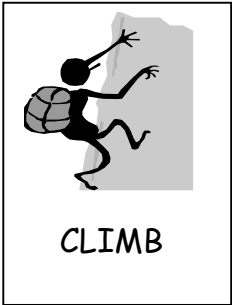
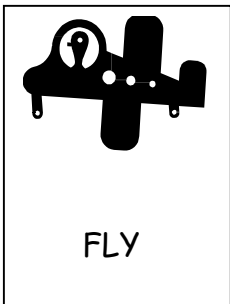
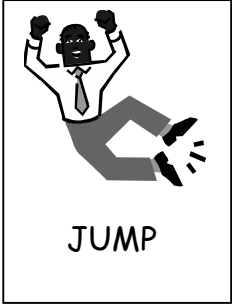
This activity allows children to appreciate that they are complex and varied in their skills and strengths. Give each child a cardboard box (or a large envelope might do the trick), using the label on page four of this document if you wish and let the children decorate them to personalise them.

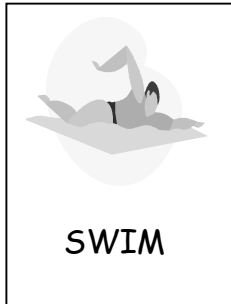
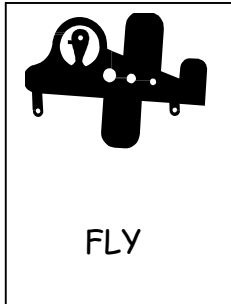
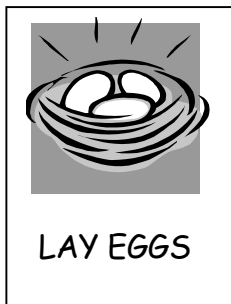

Whenever a child does something which demonstrates a strength, attribute or skill, write a little description of what they did and what skill or strength it demonstrated. Include photographs where you have them, or cut out pictures from magazines which show the strength. If they have made something small using the skill, this could go in the box too.

This means that they notice the strength AS AND WHEN they use it, which is more immediate and has more context. When their confidence is low, an adult can help them to refer to the box to remind them of their strengths.



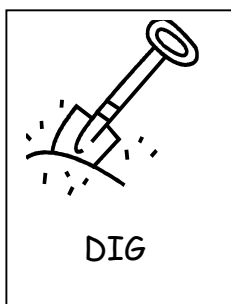
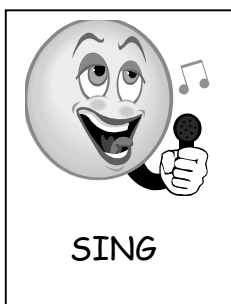
The point of the exercise is for children to see the range of strengths they demonstrate over a prolonged period and that all their friends have different combinations of strengths and that everyone is different but interesting.

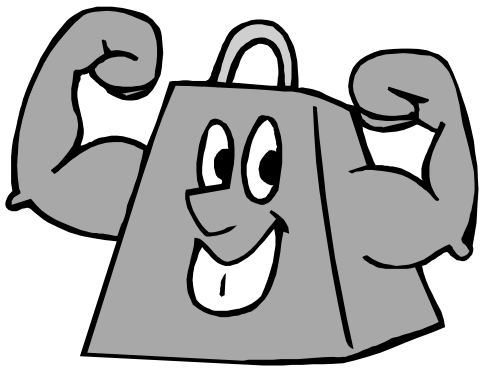
Activity Two – Animal Skills Bingo

 <p>DIG</p>	 <p>CLIMB</p>
 <p>FLY</p>	 <p>JUMP</p>

 <p>SWIM</p>	 <p>FLY</p>
 <p>LAY EGGS</p>	 <p>SING</p>

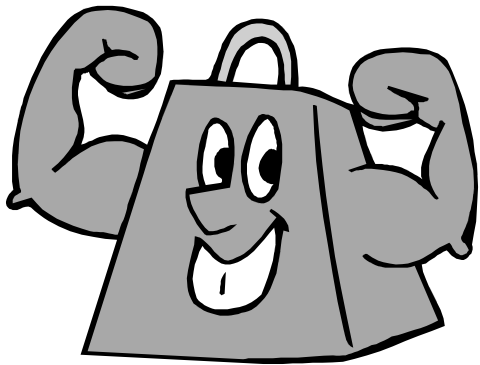
 <p>RUN</p>	 <p>LAY EGGS</p>
 <p>CLIMB</p>	 <p>SWIM</p>

 <p>JUMP</p>	 <p>RUN</p>
 <p>DIG</p>	 <p>SING</p>



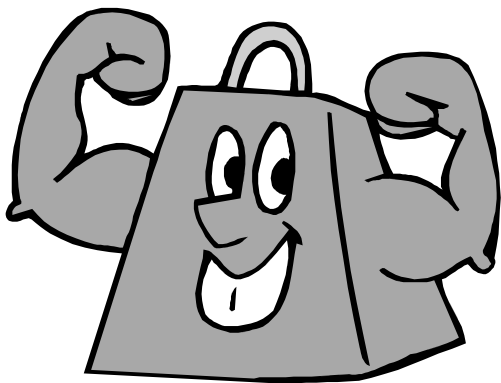
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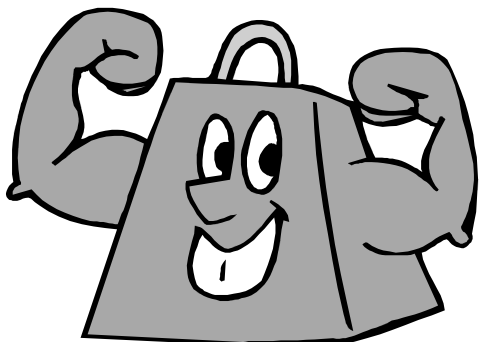
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Useful Web Links

Up To Ten

This is an American fun education site which has loads of activities, online games and other resources which can help children develop different skills. Click on the free games section. Younger children's games are in the Boowa and Kwala section and older kids games 5/6+ are in the games section. Games are helpfully divided into categories so you can choose games which teach a certain skill, e.g. co-ordination, memory, counting etc.

www.uptoten.com/

Kids Space

Mostly for the older end and into KS1, this site offers lots of opportunities to get involved in creative endeavours online, upload your stories and pictures and share them with others. The gallery is good to see all the different ideas children have.

www.kids-space.org/

ABC Australia

Might seem an odd choice, it's one of many TV related games sites, but the reason I have picked it is that it clearly gives rough ages as a guide before you pick, so it's easy to find something appropriate quickly.

www.abc.net.au/children/games/