

# Pieces of Eight!

## Areas of Learning

### Primary

The Arts (Art and Design)

### Post-Primary

The Arts (Art and Design)

## Setting the Scene

No pirate ship would be complete without the Captain's parrot. In Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Treasure Island*, the one-legged pirate Long John Silver had a parrot which cried 'pieces of eight'. The parrot's name was Captain Flint. This lesson gives some ideas for sensory art activities to create your class ship's parrot.

## What to Do

Gather learners together in the art area. If possible source a squawking parrot hand puppet. Use the puppet to 'call' learners to the circle. Once all learners are together the puppet can say 'hello' to learners individually, and learners can reply by activating parrot sounds on a communication device or tablet. Read the poem together.

Captain Hook he had a bird  
And it could talk, oh how absurd!  
With multicoloured feathers bright  
His plume was such a glorious sight  
Yellow, red, green and blue  
With yellow feet and big beak too  
On captain's shoulder he'd be perched  
As over the waves the Jolly Roger lurched  
But he'd never say 'Who's a pretty boy?'  
Cos the pirate parrot shouts 'Land Ahoy!

## Footprint 'Flint'

Dip learner's full foot in paint or use sponges, rollers or brushes to paint feet depending on sensory preference. Add extra multicolours to the toes and toe pads. Support learners to stand on a piece of card or press the card against the foot. Attach a pre-cut beak onto the side of the heel print. While the paint is still wet support learners to explore glitter, sparkles and coloured sand and drop or sprinkle over allowing it to stick in the wet paint.

## Feathered 'Flint'

Have a variety of real feathers of different colours, lengths and texture for the learners and feather shapes cut from foil, crepe, tissue and cellophane. Support learners to explore the different colours and textures of the feathers and to grasp and release where appropriate onto a pre-glued parrot cut-out.

## Fingers 'Flint'

Turn the learner's handprint into a colourful parrot by making the thumb the head by adding a beak and eye and making the fingers the brightly-coloured feathers. Explore different textures of 'paint' by adding sand to paint, mixing paint with shaving foam and PVA (stays puffy when dried), mixing glitter with paint or mixing talcum powder with paint. For an added olfactory element put a few drops of scents like lemon, mint or strawberry essence in the corresponding paints. Remember that some learners may be tactile defensive and may not want to flatten their hands out to print. With repetition and gentle encouragement they may be able to work towards placing their prints on the page.



## What You Need

- Parrot puppet
- Communication device/ Tablet
- Paper/Plain card
- Variety of paints
- Variety of feathers
- Variety of pre-cut feathers in foil/cellophane/tissue/crepe
- PVA glue
- Variety of sponges, brushes and painting utensils
- Glitter, sparkles
- Coloured sand
- Shaving foam
- Talcum powder
- Variety of essential oils/ essence