

Tropical Lagoon

Areas of Learning

Primary

The World Around Us

Post-Primary

Environment and Society
(Geography)

Science and Technology

Setting the Scene

The lesson gives learners opportunities to explore some objects, materials and their properties which pirates may find in a fantasy tropical island lagoon through messy and sensory play.

Create a tropical lagoon environment by displaying a suitable PowerPoint or screen saver on a large screen. Use a tropical projection wheel on the wall or ceiling of the classroom or onto a mosquito net draped from the ceiling. Put bubble tubes, lava lamps and plasma projection lights on around the room. Turn on electric fans with blue and green streamers attached. Attach blue and green cellophane to windows, hang shredded chiffon and play 'under the sea' music (either natural sounds mood music, appropriate classical music, appropriate Caribbean music or a familiar film soundtrack such as Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, depending on the age and preference of your learners).

What to Do

Bring the learners together as a group in the circle area and play gentle sea music softly in the background.

Sing the song with the learners enough times so that all learners can receive a light water spray which will act as an auditory and tactile cue for the start of the lesson.

(Sung to the tune of Row, Row, Row Your Boat)

Land ahoy! The Blue Lagoon
It lies just up ahead
What will float in the waters blue?
And what lies on the sea bed?

Further Suggestions

Leave the background music playing and position the learners so that they can best explore the following sensory exploration tubs:

Pirate treasure sensory tub

Fill a tub or tray with black beans or black aquarium gravel. Mix in a variety of shiny necklaces, crystals and costume jewellery. The black background created by the beans or gravel will help learners' visual discrimination by creating visual contrast with the sparkles!

Tropical seas sensory tub

Fill a tub or tray with water beads. Water beads are a substance made from polymers used by florists in place of water in flower displays. They are completely safe and non-toxic. They begin as tiny seed-like beads and transform their appearance over six hours into juicy, plump, squidgy balls by soaking up water. They bounce wonderfully. They feel like they are full of water, but when squashed they become a jelly-like substance and can regain their original shape. For a tropical effect use green, clear and blue water beads, some real sea shells, fish and seaweed cut from craft foam.

Wishing well

For added auditory stimulation use a metal tray or tub to contain your 'wishing well'. Add a variety of different textured stones and rocks as well as gold and silver coins. The metal tray will maximise the coins as they jingle!

Buried treasure sensory tub

Fill a tub or tray with either wet or dry sand. Mix in some wild rice for varied texture. Bury secret treasures of coloured marbles and gemstones in the sand and support the learners to touch and push through the sand to find them.

Pirate treasure discovery bottle

Support learners to put sand, glitter, beads, water beads, sequins, tiny craft shells and blue water beads into an empty water bottle. Fill with water and fasten the lid (adults could secure using a glue gun.) Support learners to tip, roll and shake the bottles to see what happens to wet sand and how the different items move differently in water. This also illustrates floating and sinking concepts for the learners.

Tropical fish discovery bottle

Use small water balloons partially blown up to resemble small fish. Add aquarium gravel to the bottom of the bottle. Fill the bottle with water and a few drops of blue food colouring, close the lid tightly and secure with some tape.

Snake pit spaghetti

Cook spaghetti before the lesson. Use a lot of salt in the water to prevent sticking. Run the pasta under cold water, and coat it with oil to further prevent sticking. Dye some blue and some green using food colouring and tongs. Let the pasta dry for several minutes and place the pasta in a tub or tray to guard the treasure.



What You Need

- Underwater PowerPoint
- Access to *Audio Networks* through C2K to search for and download some sea music
- Data projector and board/screen/mosquito net
- Projection wheels
- Lava lamps
- Fans
- Blue and green cellophane
- Blue and green streamers
- Water spray
- Aquarium gravel
- Jewels
- Coins
- Costume jewellery
- Trays/Tubs
- Beans
- Rice
- Sand
- Spaghetti
- Oil
- Water bottles
- Glitter
- Shells
- Water beads
- Craft foam
- Metal tray
- Stones/Rocks
- Sequins
- Water balloons
- Crystals
- Salt
- Tongs
- Marbles
- Blue food colouring