

Thinking and Talking Floor Books

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Background information:

- It is called a 'floor book' because the book is used on the floor so that the children have close access to it.
- Writing in a thinking and talking floor book explores the shared thinking in a more formal way so that children recall each others ideas and record them through writing, drawing and photographs.
- Many children re-visit the books and learn from a previous groups experience or indeed their own ideas from a previous session.
- Thinking and talking floor books create a child centred approach, which records the evidence of the process of play and the learning that comes from it.
- Updating the floor book in consultation with children is important because:
 - It creates closer match between the child and the curriculum they are experiencing
 - It builds self esteem and positive attitudes when the learner is involved in the decision making
 - It increases intrinsic motivation, that stays with a child throughout life.
 - Children have a right to be treated with respect by valuing their thoughts and opinions.

Features of a talking and thinking floor book include:

- *Children's ideas and thoughts*
- *Open ended questions* - Questions are posed as a part of a conversation and are designed to stimulate thought and not test knowledge.
- *Higher order thinking*
- *Depth of learning* - Collating children's ideas in a book form ensures that the group focus on continuity and progression over longer blocks of time.

- *Collaborative learning* - floor books are designed to be a large size to allow children to gather around them and engage in a learning dialogue around the content of the pages.
- *A variety of methods to represent thinking* - adult scribing the questions and conversations, children's drawings, photos, adult observations.
- *Collates child centred ideas that are taken forward by the early years staff* - the floor book is an integral part of planning.
- *The books are available to children at all times.*

Floor books share:

- *Ideas*
- *Reflections*
- *Challenges, solutions and failures*
- *Thoughts*
- *Actions*
- *Observations*
- *Plans*
- *Desires*

Practical notes:

- *Children draw/write on separate pieces of paper which the adult glues into the book*
- *Notes taken from mat sessions can be typed and glued into the floorbook*
- *A conversation with an individual child can be included in the book*