

Early years science: making and flying kites

In windy weather, you could make and fly your own kites to encourage children to get involved in scientific experimentation with this guide a from forest school teacher, Tricia Pillay.

Firstly, you'll need to make your kites.

Resources

- Small pieces of lightweight fabric - squares, triangles or rectangles for the body of the kites
- Longer pieces of lightweight fabric - strips to add tails to the kites
- String - this needs to be strong so that it does not snap if a kite is flying in strong wind
- Strong bendy sticks.



Activity Outline

Making your kites

- Go on a stick hunt
 - Kites need to be quite flexible so children need 'bendy' sticks, rather than sticks that can break easily
 - Give a size guide, such as finding one stick that is the same length as their arm from elbow to wrist, and one stick that is a little shorter
- Make a cross shape with the two sticks
- Bind them together securely with string
- Attach the lightweight fabric to this by tying the fabric to the ends of the sticks
- Children can add long strips of fabric to make streamers on the kite
- Attach a long piece of string securely to the centre of the crossed sticks
 - This is the string the child will hold to fly the kite and so it should be long enough to allow considerable upwards movement.

Extending the activity

Making your kites

- Begin by flying your kites to find out which way the wind is blowing
- Then try flying your kites in very calm weather, when there is little or no wind to lift them
- Children can have lots of fun trying to make their kites fly by running very quickly, holding their kite high on a short string
- Flying kites in different weather conditions will enable children to learn about the ways in which weather affects how their kites fly.