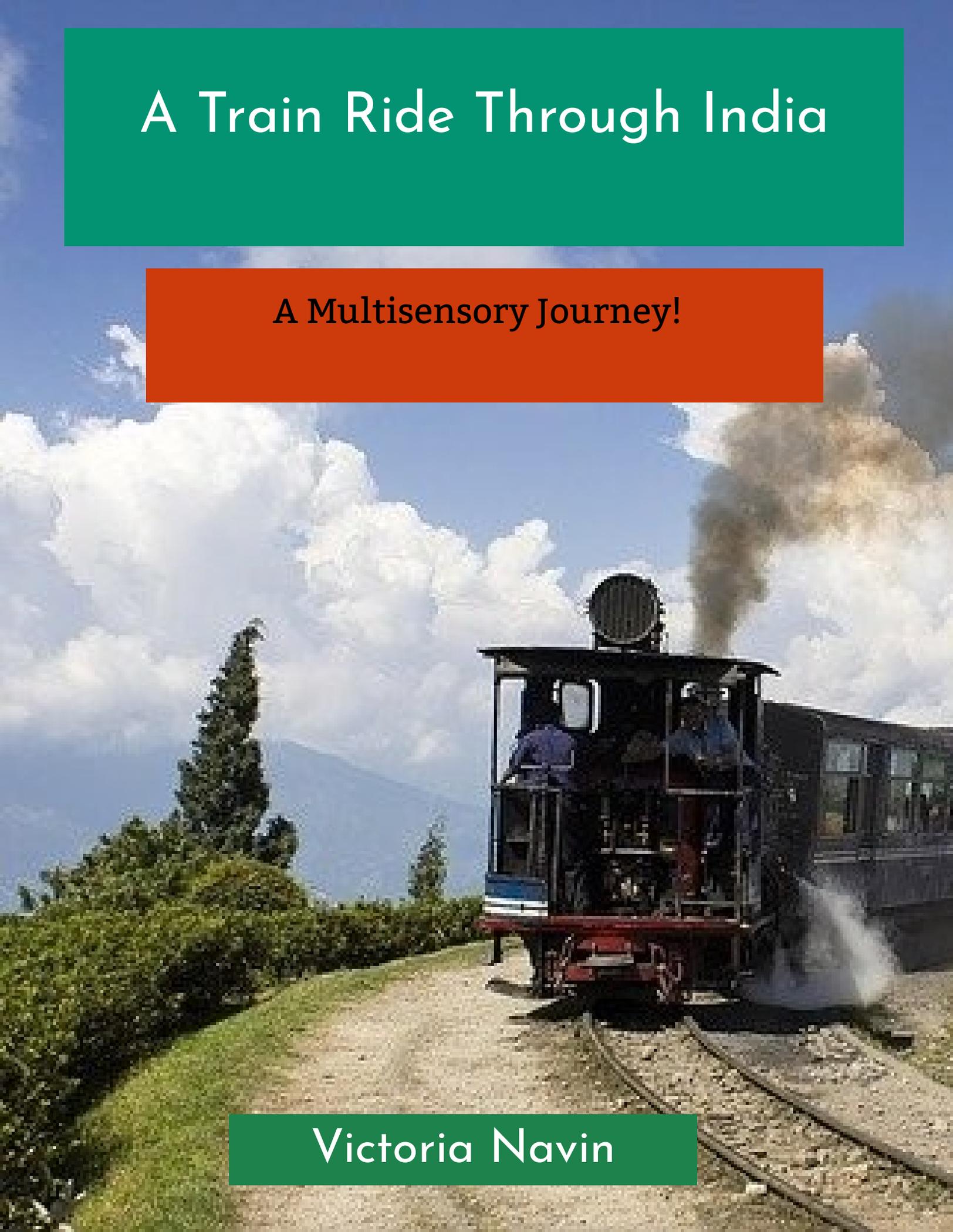


A Train Ride Through India

A Multisensory Journey!

A steam train is shown from a rear perspective, moving along a track. The train is emitting a large, billowing plume of white steam that rises into the sky. The landscape is scenic, featuring green hills, a tall, thin tree, and distant mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The train has a dark-colored engine and several passenger cars.

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Introduction

A step by step multisensory story for parents, guardians, grandparents, siblings, child-minders, early years workers, teachers, HLTA's, teaching assistants, speech therapists, play therapists, care home workers, home support workers, activity coordinators, storytellers, librarians and anyone with an interest in exploring storytelling through the senses in a fun and engaging way!

Sensory stories immerse the listener by telling a story using words and sensory stimuli (story props). Listening to rhyme and rhythm supports memory and aids learning, playing a crucial role in language development, the learning of concepts, communication and early literacy skills such as listening and attention skills, anticipation, turn-taking and making choices.

The stories are adapted to meet a range of abilities and needs from curious pre-schoolers to teenagers with complex needs. They can be used in mainstream and SEN schools as the combination of sensory stimuli, rhyme and the repetitive structure of the stories forms an excellent base on which to scaffold learning.

Exposure to stimuli allows the listener to engage with new experiences to calm and alert the sensory system, in a safe, therapeutic and fun environment and helps individuals use their senses to understand the world around them.

Multisensory Stories & SEN

Sensory stories are an excellent motivating tool for encouraging alternative communication systems. non-verbal, early communication skills, Makaton, ASL, BSL, body sign, choose boards, and to facilitate PECS exchanges. Storytelling in a SEN setting builds a bond between the storyteller and the listener, enhancing well-being and enriching their experiences. Storytelling builds trust and aids understanding and communication, social emotional development.

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Additional learning is enhanced through the development of turn taking skills, building tolerance, attention skills and sharing. Other learning outcomes are the skills of shared attention, increased engagement, achievement of learning targets, reduction in unwanted behaviours, social interaction and helping individuals to overcome barriers through a safe environment.

Observing reactions to a range of sensory stimuli enables you to build a picture of an individual's sensory preferences. This record of likes, dislikes, motivators and triggers can help parents, carers and teaching staff make informed choices to enhance daily life in areas such as diet, sensory needs, care plans, daily activities and leisure activities.

Exploring the senses through exposure to stimuli (story props), helps to build a bank of motivators that can calm an individual when they are anxious or stressed. Knowing an individual's triggers informs on the writing of behaviour plans and strategies. You may seek to avoid some triggers and work on de-sensitising others

How to tell a Multisensory Story

Identify the key words in the story highlighted in **red**. These are your story props. Set out your resources where they are easily accessible. A large colourful box with a lid is ideal as its unknown contents provide an air of anticipation and mystery to the listener. Place your resources (props) inside the box in the order in which they will appear in the story.

TIP! Store any scented props in a sealed container, it will make the smell stronger as the air in the container will be fragranced and will waft out when you remove the lid.

Choose a quiet, distraction free place that is comfortable. Present the box (lid on!) This will act as a visual cue for the listener that you are about to share a story.

Read each sentence slowly and clearly, introducing the story prop as the corresponding word in the sentence appears. There are different options suggested for story props. Follow a total communication approach and try some of the Makaton signs. Use a variety of facial expressions and gestures to communicate meaning, allow processing time for the listener to use their senses exploring the stimuli.

At the end of the story, present the listener with the props to freely explore. Depending on ability, if you are working at a sensory level you will be looking to identify items that motivate and engage the listener. At a higher level you are aiming for the listener to retell the story using the props. Encourage the listener to tidy the props into the story box. This will signify that the story session has ended.

Key Points

Repetition is the key!

Repeat the story for a minimum of 2 –3 times a week for a month then change to a different story.

Depending on your learner's ability, it may take several sessions to complete the story.

Breaking it down into smaller chunks helps the learning process, recall and memory and builds anticipation for the next story session .

Focus on having fun then and it will become an educational experience!



A Train Ride Through India

Text	Prop	Action
<p>We're on a train in India</p> <p>'All aboard it's time to go!'</p> <p>The driver blows his whistle, 'Ready... steady...off we go.'</p> <p>off we go.'</p>	<p>Makaton sign for train</p> <p>Whistle</p>	<p>To sign train using Makaton, place your arm at your side with your elbow bent and make a circle.</p> <p>Develop anticipation skills encouraging the learner to blow their whistle on the cue of 'Ready...steady...GO!'</p>
<p>I open my window, to see the sights outside</p> <p>A blast of hot air hits my face, this is one fun ride.</p>	<p>Hair dryer</p> <p>Wheat bag</p>	<p>Stating with a low speed setting, direct the air around the learner then on their hands, arms, feet and hair.</p> <p>Explore the different heat and speed settings.</p> <p>Present the wheat bag for the listener to feel the heat radiate from the wheat bag.</p>

A Train Ride Through India

A lady comes to sell her goods, she wears a sparkly dress

She tells me it's a **sari** and smiles like a princess.

Sari or sparkly material

Torch

Mirror

Engage the learner's sense of sight encouraging them to explore the colours and patterns of the material.

Engage the learner's sense of touch, encouraging them to feel the silky texture of the delicate material.

Observe how the sequins reflect and sparkle when the light of the torch shines on them.

Offer the **sari** / sparkly material to the learner to wear.

Present the **mirror** so they can see their reflection.

A Train Ride Through India

Today she's
selling bangles
They jangle on
her wrist,

I pull out a few
rupees

I simply can't
resist!

Bangles Present the **bangles** to the listener to explore.

Place the **bangles** on the learner's wrist. Let them feel of the weight of them as they dangle on their arm.

Draw attention to the sound the **bangles** make as they gently clink and jangle with each arm movement.

Can the learner practice their counting skills as they place the **bangles** onto your wrist?

She has **henna patterns** on her hands and a **bindi** on her head

A circular, little dot, of the brightest red.

Chalks

Paintbrush
& water

Face
paints

Mirror

Turmeric

Draw **henna patterns** on back of the learner's hands using face paints, chalks or plain water and a paint brush.

Mark a **bindi** on the learner's forehead using turmeric, red chalk or face paint.

Present a mirror so the listener can see their **bindi**.

A Train Ride Through India

At 12, the lunch cart rolls down the aisle, I can smell the spice,

It's my favourite dinner **spicy** chicken curry and pilau rice

Cardamom pods

Cinnamon stick

Cumin seeds

Poppadoms

Rice

Engage the learner's sense of touch as they explore the texture of the spindle-shaped cardamom pods.

Peel open the capsule to reveal the small, black, seeds inside.

Engage the sense of taste experiencing the floral smokiness of the cardamom.

Engage the sense of smell of the intense woody, nutty fragrance of the cinnamon sticks, the earthy & peppery flavour of the cinnamon.

Explore the tiny oblong, yellow-brown cumin seeds and the bitter sweetness of the spice.

Explore the white, shiny rice & crisp, round **poppadums**

We're travelling through the jungle; I hear a **lion** roar

Hidden in the undergrowth snakes slither on the floor.

Makaton sign for **lion**

Lion roar

sound effect

To sign '**lion**' using Makaton, make the shape of your face by drawing your hands from the top to the bottom of your head with claw movements.

Play the sound effect of a **lion** roar from your phone app, the internet or a talking tile.

Can the learner activate the recording device independently?

Can the learner communicate a request for assistance to listen if required?

Make your own **lion** roar noise. With your tongue rested on the roof of your mouth, make a deep noise from the base of your throat say 'roar'

Can the listener imitate the noise?

In the sky black clouds are forming, heavy with their **rain**

Here comes a monsoon of water gushing down the windowpane.

Makaton sign for **rain**

Squirty water bottle

Warm water

To sign **rain** using Makaton, hold your hands up with your fingers spread wide bring the down in straight lines to represent rain.

Using the trigger on the water bottle, mist warm water into the air around the listener.

Explore the nozzle settings to change the water pressure from a mist to a spray.

Use the water sprayer to wash off the henna patterns from their hands.

Develop Communication Skills

If you are working at a sensory level you will be looking to identify items that motivate and engage the listener. At a higher level you the aiming for the listener to retell the story using the props.

Label 3 boxes or trays 'Beginning', 'Middle' and 'End', '1st', '2nd', '3rd', '1st' 'Next' 'Last' or '1', '2', '3'. This will break the story into more manageable components. You could break this down further by having two labelled boxes, 'Beginning' and 'End'.

Can the listener pick out the key elements to the story and sort the props into their correct boxes?

Can the listener identify the prop that represented the first encounter in the story?

Can they describe or show you what happened at the end of the story?

Can they describe or show you what happened after a specific event (i.e. if presented a prop can they select the prop that followed?)

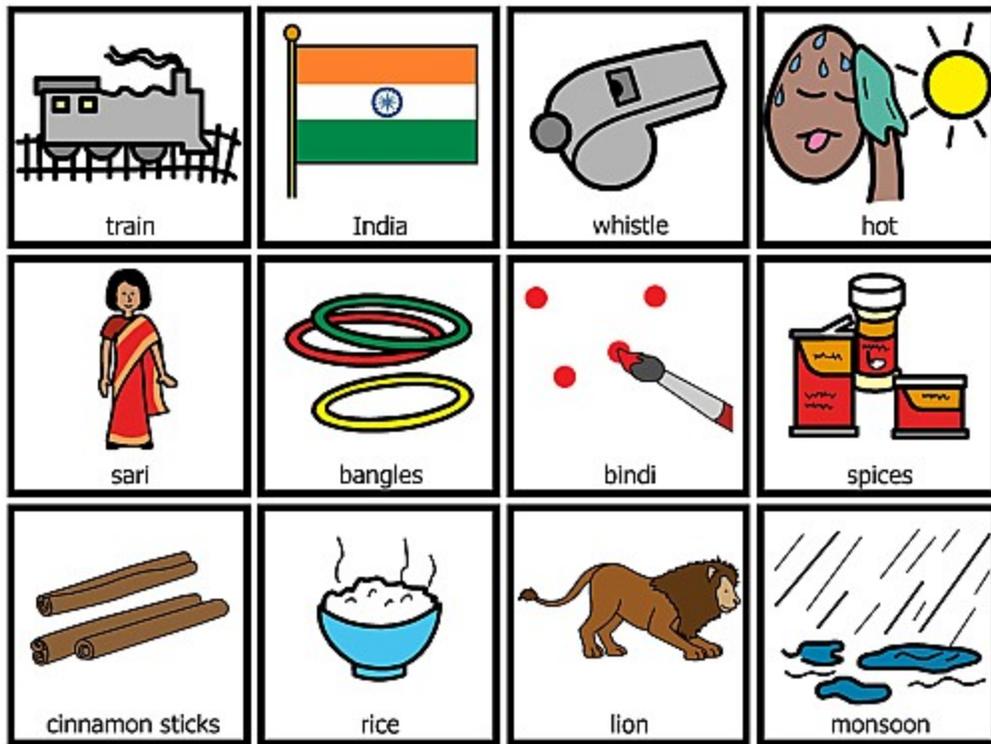
It is interesting to see the listener's interpretation of the story!

Some individuals may recall the ending of the story as that is the part they heard most recently, or they may focus on sections they enjoyed the most!



Visuals

'A Train Ride Through India' Symbols' (Created Using Boardmaker Online)



Laminate and cut out to use as manipulatives.

Use as a storyboard to check comprehension.

Themed Sensory Bag

Place items relating to the story into a bag. Encourage the learner to use their sense of smell, touch, hearing and taste to guess what the items are e.g. whistle, wheat bag, sari, sparkly material, mirror, bangles, chalk, face paint, paintbrush, turmeric, cardamom, cinnamon, rice, poppadoms, toy lion and water in a squirry bottle.

Build functional language skills by asking the learner to tell you or show you what you might do with the item and where you might find it.

Themed Listening Game

A quick search on the internet will provide you with access to a library of free audio clips and sound effects that can be played via your phone, apps, iPad, Kindle or recorded on a Dictaphone.

Play sound effects relating to the story for the learner to guess to experience e.g. lion roar, snake hissing, monsoon and a train.

Can the communicate a request for 'more' to listen to the sound again?

Can the listener activate the listening device independently?

Can they imitate the noise?

Can they communicate a request for 'more' to listen to the sound again?

Can the listener activate the listening device?

Make a Sensory Umbrella by tying objects related to the story to the ribs of the umbrella with string or ribbon.

Sensory Exploration

Layer a tray, or tub with lentils and large, jungle like leaves. Add items from the story a train, a toy lion, a rubber snake, a whistle, cardamom pods, cinnamon sticks, bangles and dried rice for the learner to freely explore.

Take note of the learner's preferred items as these can be used as motivators.

Demonstrate Self Expression

Encourage the development of imagination and personal creativity through arts, craft and role play.

Can the listener re-tell the story through a piece themed of artwork exploring the use of different mediums?

Sensory Flag of India

This activity focuses on the colours of the Indian flag, orange, green and white.

Draw three horizontal lines onto a sheet of paper.

Using any means (fingers, brush, sponges) paint the top section orange using saffron, paprika or turmeric mixed in a tiny amount of water.

Using PVA or a glue stick, affix dried rice to the white middle section of the flag. For the final section of the flag stick large green leaves that represent the jungle.



Group Activity

If you have access to a whiteboard then play footage of a train journey through India from the driver's cab view. (YouTube have a good selection.)

Dim the lighting.

Play relaxing Indian background music.

Seat the listeners on chairs, bean bags or mats in twos as if on a train leaving a gap between for you to walk in between.

As the storyteller, dress in a Sari or sparkly material.

Choose two students, a ticket seller, and a train conductor. (Pupils can turn-take these roles in future sessions promoting sharing and turn-taking.)



Student A is the ticket seller who will walk down the 'aisle' (Link to maths)

Depending on ability students, can exchange coins for a ticket/ pay the correct money/work out change.

Student B is the Train Conductor (offer the learner a hat to wear). The conductor will blow the **whistle** to signify the start of the journey.

You can then start the story walking through the chairs down the 'train aisle' presenting your props to learners.

Present a fan to cool them. (hand fan, batter operated fan)

Group Activity

Walk the length of the 'train' presenting the stimuli to students.

Decorate their hands with **henna**

Offer to place a bindi to their foreheads.

Offer each student a bangle to wear.

Place herbs and spices/poppadoms/rice on a tray/plastic plate and offer a choice for students to touch, smell and taste an item.

Play the sound effects of an elephant and the snake (Can students guess what they are?)

Experience a train tunnel (drape a sari, sparkly or patterned material/blankets over the students' heads.)

Shine your torch as you emerge from the tunnel.

Present a monsoon (water sprayer) to wash the 'henna' of their hands.

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Allergies/Intolerances

The activities in these stories are ideas. You are wholly responsible for any activities you decide to carry out. If you are concerned or have doubts regarding any activity or prop used, then seek advice before starting.

Ensure all activities are supervised by a responsible adult and be aware of choking hazards. Check the ingredients in any items you may be using for any potential food or skin allergies or respiratory reactions. If you see any signs of redness, swelling or other symptoms of a suspected reaction seek immediate medical advice.

The interactions should be led by the listener who should be allowed to participate without expectation. Never force stimuli and stop the activity if the listener shows signs that they are not enjoying the session.





Rhyming Multisensory Stories
Storytelling Through the Senses



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